Growth Management and Regional Government:

How an Interpretive Approach Can Explain Politicians' Commitment to

Smart Growth Policies in Waterloo Region, Ontario

Caitlin Michelle Daley

Abstract

This dissertation is a case study that explains how the Waterloo area's regional government in Ontario, Canada, came to embrace smart growth policies, which aim to protect agricultural and environmentally sensitive areas from urban sprawl while creating more dense urban communities. It develops an interpretive approach based on Mark Bevir and Rod Rhodes's work on situated agency to explain why the 2010 to 2014 Region of Waterloo council defended the Region's smart growth policies against two major challenges, choosing to build its intensification-focused light rail transit (LRT) project despite public controversy, and choosing to appeal an Ontario Municipal Board (OMB) ruling that threatened its most recent official plan.

Based on interviews, archival research, and document review, the dissertation is written in three parts that tell three kinds of stories, using Bevir and Rhodes's concepts of tradition, dilemma, and webs of beliefs. Part I uses a historical narrative to explain the tradition of growth management and regional government in the Waterloo area. It finds that regional government and growth management have conditioned each other over the course of the last half century. Part II explains the dilemmas that the 2010 to 2014 regional council faced as a group in deciding to defend its smart growth policies. It finds that dilemmas related to light rail transit were resolved, and that meaningful dilemmas did not form as a result of the OMB ruling. Part III uses a series of narrative vignettes to examine the beliefs and actions of each regional councillor as an individual in the context of their own web of beliefs. It finds that politicians supported smart growth in their own ways and for their own reasons.

The dissertation concludes with an assessment of what the three stories taken together show with respect to both specific aspects of planning policy and our understanding of practices of municipal government in Waterloo Region. Finally, it suggests that an 'interpretive

institutionalism' in political science may be both possible and warranted, and that narrative

approaches to the study of politics can produce accounts that are both academically rigorous and

interesting to a broader audience.

To Jeff, always…

Acknowledgements

The approach I have used for this project assumes that we are all situated agents: we innovate against the backgrounds that are a first (and continuing) influence on us. This background, for me, has included enormous and intentional contributions from the people who supported me in this challenge, which has been one of the greatest of my life.

Dennis Pilon graciously took me on as his PhD student. I came to him with a strange project relatively late in my doctoral studies, and he encouraged me to write the project I needed to write, while artfully steering me away from potential pitfalls. He advised me based on my own needs, and went out of his way to ensure my professional development as a scholar alongside the production of this dissertation. Dennis consistently models the kind of socially and politically engaged scholarship to which I aspire. I could not have asked for a better mentor and guide.

My committee members, Pierre Filion (Waterloo) and Karen Murray, gave me their thoughtful attention and insights, and used their impressive ranges of expertise in all things urban to make sure I did not miss the big picture or important details in the various threads of this project. Caroline Andrew (Ottawa), Douglas Young, and David Mutimer joined with my committee to engage me in a productive and rewarding discussion at my dissertation defence.

My first PhD supervisor at York, Elizabeth Dauphinee, always took my work seriously, and respected me enough to help me recognize that my first dissertation project was wrong for me. She helped me to come to terms with the scholar I am not, which allowed me to find the scholar that I am. My supervisors from past degrees, Eleanor MacDonald (Queen's) and the late Richard Nutbrown (Waterloo), both supported me in research that pursued my emerging interests, and they provided crucial advice about my future in the academy, which led me here.

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Introduction

In 2002, Councillor Sean Strickland raised a serious concern about the Region of Waterloo's bold plans to curb urban sprawl.[1] Waterloo Region, as its name suggests, has a two-tier regional government system. Despite the concerted efforts of the Province of Ontario and local supporters of municipal amalgamation in the 1990s, Waterloo Region emerged from the Mike Harris and Ernie Eves eras intact. It has not been amalgamated into a mega-city. It retains the three urban cities and four rural townships that it has had since 1973, all with their own local governments, and a single regional government that covers them all.

Strickland's concern rested on the area's continued fragmentation. While the broad Regional Official Plan (ROP) is designed by the upper-tier regional government, local-tier area municipalities create their own official plans within it, and are responsible for specific developments on specific plots of land. "All of these battles are going to be fought at the local councils," Strickland explained. "If this is going to work, it's going to be absolutely critical that all councillors of all municipalities are on the same page."[2]

It was understandable that Strickland would see regional government as an impediment to growth management. By 2002, two-tier regional government was decidedly out of fashion. The weaknesses of regional government systems, such as ongoing jurisdictional disagreements and "apparent duplication, overlap and lack of coordination,"[3] found particular voice in the principles

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[1] Jeff Outhit, "Co-Operation Key to Planned Growth," *Kitchener-Waterloo Record*, December 4, 2002, Final edition, sec. Front.

[2] Ibid.

[3] Andrew Sancton, *Governing Canada's City-Regions: Adapting Form to Function* (Montreal: Institute for Research on Public Policy, 1994), 57.

of Premier Mike Harris's *Common Sense Revolution*,[4] which focused on what his Progressive Conservative Party saw as government waste and excessively high tax rates. The Progressive Conservative Ontario government had, by the early 2000s, managed to reduce the number of regional governments from 11 to 6.[5] After years of criticism over inefficiency and coordination problems, it was a fair guess that a regional government system like Waterloo's was ill-suited to bold, long-term endeavours on anything, let alone on something as difficult as constraining and directing urban growth.

Responding to Strickland's remarks, veteran regional chair Ken Seiling made it clear that he, too, saw the challenges that smart growth within regional government might bring. "I think it will test the system," he said.[6]

Seiling was right. The Region of Waterloo's ambitious smart growth plans were a high-stakes test of its regional government system. And, by and large, regional government in Waterloo has passed that test.

In recent years, the Region of Waterloo[7] has been unusually successful among its peers in the Greater Golden Horseshoe area in instituting and supporting policies for smart growth. But

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[4] See Andrew Sancton, *Merger Mania: The Assault on Local Government* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2000), 104.

[5] Ibid., 49; Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, "Municipal Restructuring Activity Summary Table" (Government of Ontario, January 20, 2015), http://www.mah.gov.on.ca/AssetFactory.aspx?did=6212.

[6] Outhit, "Co-Operation Key to Planned Growth."

[7] In this dissertation, I use the term the Region of Waterloo, or simply the Region, to refer to the Regional Municipality of Waterloo, the formal upper-tier municipal government corporation. In contrast, when describing the area, I use the term Waterloo Region (after 1973) or the Waterloo area (including before 1973). Similarly, I capitalize the names of area municipalities when discussing the corporate municipal structure (e.g. "City of

this story goes back to well before the Region of Waterloo was created in 1973. Across decades, the same issues have persisted in changed contexts. At the same time, many of the same people, particularly a number of politicians and civil servants, have been involved in these issues for decades. Others are more recent additions to local government in Waterloo Region.

What these people share is something remarkable: in spite of different experiences, backgrounds, and positions, they generally share a belief in the importance of smart growth. Indeed, the elected members of regional council from 2010 to 2014 agreed to invest significant financial and political resources to strengthen and protect their smart growth plans from two major challenges. First, they approved a tremendously controversial light rail transit project, at a total capital cost of $818 million, $253 million of which is being borne by the Region through its normal limited taxation powers.[8] The project, now known as ION, has been justified largely as a tool for encouraging intensification in core areas and preventing the need for more car infrastructure and further sprawl into the countryside.[9] Second, Regional Council chose to appeal, at its own expense, a ruling of the Ontario Municipal Board against its 2010 Official Plan.[10] The ruling would have greatly expanded the amount of non-urban land that would be

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Kitchener"), and I do not capitalize them when describing the geographic area or broader community within it (e.g. "city of Kitchener").

[8] Region of Waterloo, "The Story of Rapid Transit in Waterloo Region," March 3, 2014, 23, http://rapidtransit.regionofwaterloo.ca/en/multimedialibrary/resources/IONStory.pdf.

[9] Region of Waterloo, "The Story of Rapid Transit in Waterloo Region."

[10] Terry Pender, "Region Defends Actions to Curb Sprawl; Council Votes to Appeal Decision Opening More Lands to Development," *Waterloo Region Record*, January 30, 2013, First edition, sec. Local.

converted to urban uses,[11] and would have set precedents that were widely seen to undermine the provincial Growth Plan across the Greater Golden Horseshoe.

So it was that, during the 2010 to 2014 term of council, Waterloo Region was at the forefront of provincial efforts to promote smart growth, and its political leaders seemed to be firmly behind it. How did this happen?

My broad research question, developed below, is as follows: how was smart growth embraced in Waterloo Region? More specifically, why did the 2010 to 2014 regional council defend its smart growth plans when they were threatened?

This project finds that the success of smart growth in Waterloo Region has not been in spite of regional government, despite Strickland's understandable concerns and the general perception of two-tier regional systems. Nor has it been simply because of regional government. It is most accurate to say that growth management and regional government in Waterloo Region have conditioned each other.

This dissertation examines this conditional connection as it is enacted by situated agents. I build on the insights provided by Mark Bevir and Rod Rhodes[12] for addressing the tension between structure and individual agency that so often snares explanations of political phenomena. Using Bevir and Rhodes's notion of situated agency, I develop a methodology to apply their interpretive approach to the institutionally rich case of growth management in Waterloo Region. I structure this work around Bevir and Rhodes's concepts of tradition,

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[11] Ontario Municipal Board, "Decision Delivered by Steven Stefanko and Joseph Sniezek and Order of the Board," January 21, 2013, http://www.omb.gov.on.ca/e-decisions/pl110080-Jan-21-2013.pdf.

[12] *Governance Stories*, Routledge Advances in European Politics (New York: Routledge, 2006); Mark Bevir and R. A. W. Rhodes, *The State as Cultural Practice* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010); *Routledge Handbook of Interpretive Political Science* (New York: Routledge, 2016).

dilemma, and webs of beliefs. This approach allows me to connect the tradition of regional government and growth management in Waterloo Region with specific dilemmas faced by regional council as a group in the 2010 to 2014 period, and with the webs of beliefs of each individual politician on council. I propose that such an approach can suggest a path for a meaningfully interpretive institutionalist approach to the study of politics, and that narrative approaches can produce accounts that are both academically rigorous and interesting to a broader audience.

In this introduction, I describe how I became interested in the study of this council's commitment to smart growth. I then explain why the Waterloo case is more broadly interesting and important, and worthy of further study. I finally outline some of the limitations of the project, and provide a brief overview of the rest of the dissertation.

Politicians and Smart Growth in Waterloo Region

On a Tuesday afternoon in March of 2014, I rushed back from my teaching responsibilities in Toronto to join a meeting of the Region of Waterloo's Planning and Works Committee that had already started. Regional committees are comprised of all regional councillors, and those councillors were debating whether to accept staff's recommendation and select a consortium to build and run the Region's LRT project, approved years earlier. Having arrived late, I stood at the back of the room wearing my coat, hovering over the power outlet that would allow me to recharge my phone after a full day's commute.

I stood, and I listened. I listened to 15 politicians[13] debate the selection of a winning bid for building the ION light rail transit system. But really, I realized, I was listening to 15 people

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[13] While all councillors were in attendance, one councillor declared a pecuniary interest and did not participate in the debate or the vote. Region of Waterloo, "Planning and Works Committee Minutes: Tuesday,

telling stories. They were variations on the stories I had heard them tell at meetings like this before. Many were stories about smart growth: about transit, about farmland, about the environment, about infrastructure, about vibrant cities. But there were other stories, too: about regional government, about past conflicts and collaborations, about campaign promises, about conversations with mayors and with neighbours. They were stories about why these people did what they did, and how they justified what they were about to do. Stories about how they think and what they believe. Stories about the choices they make in the constrained environment in which they operate.

I had been coming to these meetings for years. But so far, I had been thinking like a community advocate. I started showing up in 2009, when I heard that the Region was considering building an LRT system. At that time, I was a dedicated user of public transit in a mostly car-oriented community. I went to the council meeting and spoke in support of the project. I had sat in this same room in 2011, when council had decided to proceed with the LRT project after a substantial review and despite significant controversy and opposition. I had spent several months working with other individuals and groups, pushing regional councillors in person, by phone, by email, and through delegation presentations to support the project, and trying to convince our families, neighbours and other community members to do the same. That night in 2011, the packed room overwhelmingly cheered when regional council finally approved the project, and I cheered along with them.

That was how I first learned about the Region's plans for smart growth, with its urban growth boundaries and core intensification built around an LRT corridor. In 2013, when the

March 4, 2014," March 4, 2014, http://www.regionofwaterloo.ca/en/regionalGovernment/resources/PM2014-0304.pdf.

Region's plan was threatened by an OMB ruling, I and others would come together again to support the Region's appeal and the provincial government's smart growth policies.

But by March of 2014, I was starting to see growth management politics in Waterloo Region as something I wanted to study, not just influence. And I was realizing that what had been happening in Waterloo Region was unusual. Other communities across the province were struggling to secure political support for the same kinds of initiatives. Hamilton councillors were openly second-guessing the city's LRT plans.[14] There seemed to be little coherent support in the City of Brampton council for an LRT project that would serve Brampton and Mississauga.[15] And recent data on the provincial Growth Plan suggested that other communities were not embracing growing up instead of out to the same extent that Waterloo Region was.[16]

As I listened to those councillors talk once again about LRT and what it meant to them, I started to hear them as a researcher, not a strategist. From the back of the room, I could hear these stories again from a new perspective. All of these politicians were telling their own stories in their own way. But they were sharing themes and ideas that spoke to a much bigger story about their vision for their community and their role or responsibility in fulfilling it. Their stories

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[14] Samantha Craggs, "Council Support Softens for LRT in Hamilton," *CBC News*, May 7, 2014, http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/hamilton/news/council-support-softens-for-lrt-in-hamilton-1.2634887.

[15] Peter Criscione, "LRT in Brampton Risks Being Derailed without a Champion: Jeffrey," *Brampton Guardian*, March 12, 2014, http://www.bramptonguardian.com/news-story/4409132-lrt-in-brampton-risks-being-derailed-without-a-champion-jeffrey/.

[16] Rian Allen and Philippa Campsie, "Implementing the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe" (The Neptis Foundation, October 2013), http://www.neptis.org/sites/default/files/growth_plan_2013/theneptisgrowthplanreport_final.pdf.

connected them to a broad history: one that combined questions of urban growth, land use planning, regional government, and much more.

It wasn't just planners and experts who were behind the Region of Waterloo's smart growth plans. Those plans had solid support from politicians. Regional council had not only adopted these smart growth initiatives in the first place; it was also defending them when they were threatened. And its members were constantly describing those policies in the context of their beliefs about them.

How did we get here, I wondered? How did regional council come to believe in smart growth and act on it?

The Waterloo Case

I was realizing that the case that interested me in my community was just as interesting on a provincial scale. Waterloo Region has recently been at the forefront of the Province of Ontario's efforts to promote smart growth in the area surrounding Ontario's largest city, Toronto. As Douglas Porter of the Urban Land Institute explains, "smart growth" approaches to urban planning arose in the 1990s in "reaction to worsening trends in traffic congestion, school overcrowding, air pollution, loss of open space, effacement of valued historic places, and skyrocketing public facilities costs."[17] The "key principles of smart growth" are: [1] "compact, multiuse development;" [2] "open-space conservation;" [3] "expanded mobility;" [4] "enhanced liveability;" [5] "efficient management and expansion of infrastructure; and" [6] "infill, redevelopment, and adaptive use in built-up areas."[18] Put most simply, as it often is in Waterloo Region, the goal of smart growth is growing up instead of out.

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[17] Douglas R. Porter, *Making Smart Growth Work* (Urban Land Institute, 2002), 5.

[18] Ibid., 1.

In the last decade, the Province of Ontario introduced policy frameworks to require smart growth approaches in municipalities across the Greater Golden Horseshoe, which covers 21 upper- and single-tier municipalities in Toronto and its surrounding area. Along with creating Ontario's Greenbelt in 2005, the province created the 2006 Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe, which requires municipalities to meet minimum targets for intensification and density. Starting in 2015, municipalities would have to have an intensification rate of 40%, meaning 40% of their new residential development must occur within the "built-up area" within their existing urban boundaries.[19] Additionally, new density requirements in the Growth Plan are for areas of new urban expansion. This "designated greenfield area" is selected for conversion to urban uses during the life of the plan, and must be planned to accommodate at least "50 residents and jobs combined per hectare."[20]

These plans can be seen as an attempt to solve a principal-agent dilemma in multilevel governance. Multilevel governance emerges, as Martin Horak explains, where there are "policy problems whose resolution is beyond the authority and/or capacity of a single governmental agent and that therefore require the simultaneous deployment of authority and resources by multiple policy agents."[21] This happens when policy problems need "policy responses that are

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[19] Ontario Ministry of Infrastructure, "Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe: Office Consolidation, January 2012," January 2012, 14, https://www.placestogrow.ca/content/ggh/plan-cons-english-all-web.pdf.

[20] Ibid., 19.

[21] Martin Horak and Robert A. Young, eds., *Sites of Governance: Multilevel Governance and Policy Making in Canada's Big Cities* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2012), 340.

tailored to local conditions (thus necessitating local involvement), yet exceed the capacity and/or jurisdiction of local agents."[22]

The provincial government in Ontario is the only entity with adequate authority to shape the massive urban growth and suburbanization in the Toronto metropolitan region, and it has been trying to address challenges related to urban expansion since the 1960s.[23] But growth planning requires detailed implementation in various local communities, affecting decisions as specific as development proposals on single plots of land. Thus, despite substantial constitutional authority over municipalities,[24] the province must rely on them to act as its agents.[25] Yet municipalities face various political, financial, and institutional pressures that may put them at odds with provincial planning goals, and implementing them can incur significant local administrative and infrastructure costs. It is difficult for the province to monitor progress on such complex planning, particularly while it is happening. This is an archetypal principal-agent dilemma, or "agency problem."[26]

As a result, the province is reliant on municipalities to implement its goals at the local level. They have done so with a range of responses, but the Region of Waterloo has followed the

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[22] Ibid., 240.

[23] Richard White, *Planning Toronto: The Planners, the Plans, Their Legacies, 1940-80* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2016).

[24] Warren Magnusson, "Are Municipalities Creatures of the Provinces?," *Journal of Canadian Studies/Revue D'études Canadiennes* 39, no. 2 (2005): 5–29.

[25] See Dietmar Braun, "Who Governs Intermediary Agencies? Principal-Agent Relations in Research Policy-Making," *Journal of Public Policy* 13, no. 2 (1993): 135–62.

[26] Kathleen M. Eisenhardt, "Agency Theory: An Assessment and Review," *The Academy of Management Review* 14, no. 1 (1989): 58, doi:10.2307/258191.

province's policy lead with unusual gusto. It is the only single- or upper-tier municipality in Ontario's Greater Golden Horseshoe[27] that opted to immediately set an intensification target higher than the minimum required by the provincial Growth Plan.[28] As a related Neptis report notes, "Some municipalities appear to have a greater willingness or desire to intensify than others,"[29] and the Region of Waterloo seems to be much more willing than most. The Region is also alone among the single- and upper-tier municipalities in exceeding the minimum densities for greenfield development.[30] Despite at least three requests from the Region, the area was not included in the initial Greenbelt upon its creation.[31] The Region thus created its own protections for farmland and environmentally sensitive areas, and its plans also include the Countryside Line, its own version of an urban growth boundary.[32]

Beyond simply responding positively to provincial smart growth requirements, there is reason to think that the Region of Waterloo has been providing leadership on smart growth, as well. The Region of Waterloo's 2003 Regional Growth Management Strategy (RGMS), arising out of decades of urban boundary planning, is seen to have been used by the province as a

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[27] Toronto's intensification target, though higher, is largely irrelevant, since all future projects in this built-up municipality will necessarily be infill. Allen and Campsie, "Implementing the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe," 42. While Peel plans to eventually exceed the provincial target, it initially decided to "increase the intensification target over time" Ibid., 40.

[28] Allen and Campsie, "Implementing the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe," 40.

[29] Ibid., 42.

[30] Ibid., 48.

[31] Kevin Eby and John Lubczynski, "Co-Ordinated Review of Ontario's Land Use Policy Plans," Planning, Development and Legislative Services (Kitchener, ON: Region of Waterloo, May 26, 2015), 227–28, http://www.regionofwaterloo.ca/en/regionalGovernment/resources/PW/PA2015-0526.1.pdf#page=215.

[32] Ibid., 228–29.

template for the 2006 Growth Plan, as Regional Chair Ken Seiling proudly noted at the August 2014 ground-breaking for the Region's light rail transit system.[33]

Despite this leadership and relative success, as noted above, the Region's smart growth approach has faced major recent challenges, but the Region of Waterloo has shown significant commitment to this approach in spite of them. The Region made headlines in 2013 when it announced it would appeal, at its own expense, an Ontario Municipal Board ruling that undermined its new Official Plan and the province's Growth Plan.[34] The OMB sided with developers who wanted 1,053 hectares of greenfield land opened to development within the life of the plan, while the Region's Official Plan designated up to 85 hectares.[35] The ruling was also widely seen to set a precedent that would undermine the Growth Plan's density provisions across the province.[36] The provincial government, at local urging, eventually took the unusual step of joining the appeal of its own tribunal's ruling in court.[37]

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[33] Region of Waterloo, *ION Groundbreaking* (Waterloo, ON, 2014).

[34] Region of Waterloo, "Regional Council Appeals Ontario Municipal Board Decision on the Regional Official Plan," *Region of Waterloo*, January 29, 2013, http://www.regionofwaterloo.ca/en/newslist/index.aspx?corpId=58cynQlfgqiAYQyTLmpurQeQuAleQuAl&newsId=JXvEiwByq0w0AqNJtE6ShAeQuAleQuAl.

[35] Ontario Municipal Board, "Decision Delivered by Steven Stefanko and Joseph Sniezek and Order of the Board."

[36] Terry Pender, "OMB Decision Undermines Region's Authority, Prof Says," *Waterloo Region Record*, January 29, 2013, First edition, sec. Local.

[37] CBC News, "Province to Join Region in Attempt to Save Development Plan," *CBC News*, April 15, 2013, http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/kitchener-waterloo/province-to-join-region-in-attempt-to-save-development-plan-1.1315017/.

Perhaps most remarkably, the Region is also following through with construction of a controversial light rail transit (LRT) project, at a capital cost of $818 million, of which $253 million is being paid by the Region itself.[38] This requirement for local investment is unlike the conditions for more recent LRT projects in the Greater Toronto Area, which have received commitments for full funding from the provincial government.[39] First approved in 2009, the LRT project faced enormous public controversy in the buildup to and aftermath of the 2010 municipal election. After a detailed review and an "unprecedented public consultation process,"[40] with demanding voices on both sides, the project was approved again in 2011[41] despite enormous pressure from some opponents, and official construction began in the summer of 2014.[42] In the view of many supporters and most of regional council, investment in LRT was necessary as a land use planning tool to support the Region's Official Plan to protect farmland and prevent urban sprawl.

While the fragility of the Region's success is apparent from the OMB ruling and its eventually settled appeal,[43] both the court appeal and the LRT project are evidence of an elected

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[38] Region of Waterloo, "The Story of Rapid Transit in Waterloo Region."

[39] Paige Desmond and Jeff Outhit, "Province's LRT Funding in Hamilton 'injustice,' Councillor Says," *Waterloo Region Record*, May 27, 2015, http://www.therecord.com/news-story/5645839-province-s-lrt-funding-in-hamilton-injustice-councillor-says/.

[40] Region of Waterloo, "The Story of Rapid Transit in Waterloo Region," 8.

[41] Ibid., 16.

[42] Paige Desmond, "Light Rail Vision Moves Closer to Reality; Politicians Gather for Groundbreaking Ceremony at Waterloo Site for Ion Maintenance Facility," *Waterloo Region Record*, August 22, 2014, First edition, sec. News.

[43] Paige Desmond, "OMB Accepts Settlement of Regional Land Dispute," *Waterloo Region Record*, June 19, 2015, First edition, sec. Local.

regional council that was willing to devote significant financial and political resources to its growth management objectives. Council's commitment to smart growth is holding despite concrete challenges.

The question, then, is how this came to be. Most broadly, with this project I want to tell the story of smart growth in Waterloo Region. How did elected officials at the Region of Waterloo in the early part of the 21st century come to believe so strongly in smart growth? And when their actions in support of smart growth were challenged, why did they persist in defending them?

Broader Relevance

Beyond Waterloo's seeming exceptionalism, there are three broader reasons that the Waterloo case is worthy of study. First, the Waterloo case matters because smart growth policies matter. There is considerable, and even growing, consensus that a shift to smarter growth is necessary. Recent provincial initiatives have stressed the need to strengthen policies to promote smart growth in the Greater Golden Horseshoe,[44] and concerns about transit and transportation have played a central role in municipal, provincial, and federal elections in the area surrounding Toronto in recent years. Yet the willingness of local governments to pursue more smart growth measures like higher intensification and density targets varies greatly between municipalities, and does not seem to be linked to rates of growth or population and employment forecasts.[45] If

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[44] Advisory Panel on the Coordinated Review of the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe, the Greenbelt Plan, the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan and the Niagara Escarpment Plan, "Planning for Health, Prosperity and Growth in the Greater Golden Horseshoe: 2015 - 2041," accessed December 14, 2015, http://www.mah.gov.on.ca/Asset11110.aspx?method=1.

[45] Allen and Campsie, "Implementing the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe," 48.

provincial smart growth initiatives are to be successful in solving this principal-agent dilemma, and are to be implemented effectively across the Greater Golden Horseshoe, or elsewhere, advocates both within and outside government need better tools for understanding why such policies have succeeded in some locations.

Second, this case suggests that both political practitioners and the broader public must understand specific decisions, along with long term policy directions, as much more complex and historically embedded than they initially seem. The Region of Waterloo's LRT case is a strong example of a controversial decision that is often viewed in isolation, but which is rooted in broader debates and issues that municipal institutions and the people within them have been addressing for decades. If viewed without this context, government decision-making can seem impulsive, at best, or out of touch, at worst. Understanding how controversial decisions are connected to local institutional history and the experiences of elected officials can serve two important public purposes: it can help to deescalate the conflict between entrenched positions on controversial issues, and it can help to demystify how and why elected officials make the decisions they make. Both are important to the quality of democratic engagement in a given community.

Third, for political scientists, the Waterloo case is an illustrative example of the extent to which specific policy decisions can and must be understood within their institutional and historical contexts, and with significant regard for the particular experiences and perspectives of decision-makers. Given its historical depth and political immediacy, this case is an engaging and informative one to demonstrate the relevance of the methodological approach I develop in Chapter 2, built on Bevir and Rhodes's work on situated agency.

Thus, the case of smart growth in Waterloo Region and politicians' commitment to it is not only interesting, but also important, with respect to smart growth policy, democratic engagement, and the study of situated agency.

Limitations

In selecting this focus for the project, there are necessarily many other important questions I must set aside for now. Before I go further to address what this project does, I briefly highlight what it does not do.

Most broadly, this dissertation sets aside broad questions of power, race, gender, and colonialism in the Waterloo case and in the larger literature on urban politics and development. Most notably, it does not attempt to deal substantively with the crucial questions of colonialism and indigenous lands that underpin issues of land use across Canada, and in Waterloo Region,[46]

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[46] Most of Waterloo Region, including its most urbanized areas, sits on the Haldimand Tract, which covers six miles on either side of the Grand River. Under the Haldimand Treaty, as a result of the American Revolutionary War, the entire tract was to be "held 'in trust' by the Crown for the sole use and benefit of the Six Nations," but only 5% of that land "remains Six Nations land." Six Nations Council, "Six Miles Deep: Land Rights of the Six Nations of the Grand River," n.d., http://www.sixnations.ca/SixMilesDeep-Booklet.pdf. Much of the Haldimand Tract is still the subject of ongoing land claims. "Six Nations agreed to share" Blocks 1 through 4, which spans Waterloo Region from north to south, "with settlers on condition that a continual revenue stream be derived from these lands for 999 years to be dedicated to Six Nations 'perpetual care and maintenance.'" Six Nations states "Canada must restore with interest the monies used" for other purposes "for the past 218 years," and that they "must also define the terms by which Six Nations will continue to allow persons to share these lands over the next 781 years." Six Nations Lands & Resources Department, "Land Rights: A Global Solution for the Six Nations of the Grand River," 2015, http://www.sixnations.ca/SNGlobalSolutionsBookletFinal.pdf. As settler colonial governments continue to decide when and how indigenous lands will be developed, land use planning in Waterloo Region, as elsewhere, continues to be a fundamentally colonial activity.

nor does it engage with indigenous research methodologies and ways of knowing. It also does not engage broad and developing urban theories and critiques relating to the global city, global suburbanisms, the Anthropocene, or other critical theoretical engagements on the truly global processes visible in the Waterloo case and elsewhere.

In this project, I set aside a great deal of fascinating critical and theoretical work in urban studies and local and urban politics to look in detail at a specific topic within a fairly constrained context. I want to know about smart growth in Waterloo Region. Even within this topic, there are major debates with which I do not substantively engage. I do not focus on debates over the efficacy of smart growth and urban sustainable development efforts, or the questions of social justice which they imply. I also do not conduct a comparative project that might allow me to generalize across cases.

The trade-off, however, is that I get to engage in detail with a specific case, and a very specific question, in depth. I use a detailed qualitative study to explain a particular outcome within a fairly mainstream and routine political context. Why did this particular regional council defend its smart growth plans? How did this happen?

Dissertation Outline

The first chapter serves as a literature review, and situates my project within the context of relevant work on urban development, agency, and the topic of smart growth in Waterloo Region. The second chapter outlines Bevir and Rhodes's approach and justifies my use of it, followed by an explanation of how I operationalize their philosophical approach for this study. It also explains my detailed research methods, which are based on interviews, archival research, and document review.

Following this introductory material, the dissertation is written in three parts that tell three kinds of stories, built on Bevir and Rhodes's concepts of tradition, dilemma, and webs of beliefs. Part I uses a historical narrative to explain the tradition of growth management and regional government in the Waterloo area. It finds that regional government and growth management have conditioned each other over the course of the last half century. Part II explains the dilemmas that the 2010 to 2014 regional council faced as a group in deciding to defend its smart growth policies. It finds that dilemmas related to light rail transit were resolved, and that meaningful dilemmas did not form as a result of the OMB ruling. Part III uses a series of narrative vignettes to examine the beliefs and actions of each regional councillor as an individual in the context of their own web of beliefs. It finds that politicians supported smart growth in their own ways and for their own reasons.[47]

Finally, a conclusion chapter reviews what we learn from these three stories taken together, as well as the main findings of the project. It suggests further implications of this study for the future of smart growth in Waterloo Region, the possibilities of an interpretive institutionalism, and narrative research methods.

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[47] A detailed chapter outline chronicling the contents of the three parts is provided at the end of the methodology chapter, following the development and explanation of the methodology on which this three part structure is based.

Chapter 1: Literature Review

In this chapter, I provide an overview of the existing literature that is relevant to my study of smart growth in Waterloo Region. I begin by examining three major approaches that have been productively used to examine questions of urban development. I then explain why these three approaches, while providing crucial insights into urban development politics, are not ideally suited to answering the question that most interests me about the Waterloo case: why regional council defended its smart growth plans. I then show that the agency of politicians is worthy of further study, through a discussion of the literatures on agency in urban political economy and politicians in the Canadian political science literature. Finally, I identify the most relevant existing scholarship on Waterloo Region, and highlight the three rich topical literatures upon which this dissertation builds: the politics of planning in Ontario, smart growth, and regional government and local government reform.

Three Major Approaches to the Study of Urban Development

Studies of the politics of urban development have thrived using three major approaches, in particular. Marxism, social movements, and urban political economy have provided insightful and effective means of considering diverse questions about the politics of urban development.

In this section, I briefly outline the contribution that each of these approaches has made to scholarly understandings of urban development. I then show why each of these approaches, while providing crucial insights on the politics of urban development, is not ideally suited to answering my question about the Waterloo case.

Marxist, Social Movement, and Urban Political Economy Approaches

Marxism's productive focus on structures, rooted in critiques of capitalism, has provided rich insights into urban policymaking at the macro-level. Marxist approaches, arising in particular by the 1970s, focus on structural concerns.[1] Much of the work done by Marxists and neo-Marxists focuses on the ways in which the state supports the capitalist class and the long-term interests of capitalism itself. Michael Geddes writes that, "For Marxists, the state is a capitalist state – a form into which the contradictions of capital may move."[2] Early debates in the Marxist tradition focused on the extent of state autonomy. As Pickvance notes, structuralists departed from instrumentalists in arguing that, instead of being a direct instrument of capitalist classes, the state must have "considerable autonomy" from "the dominant class" in order to deal with divisions within the capitalist class itself, and "to 'buy off' working class strength by concessions."[3] This means that various actions and outcomes from the state are possible in the structuralist view.

These early divisions have blossomed into a much more varied field as its thinkers have responded to challenges from those concerned with scale and space, postmodernism, feminism, and race.[4] Most recently, scholars working within the Marxist tradition have provided varied and compelling analyses of neoliberalism in urban contexts in both the Global North and Global

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[1] Alan Harding, "The History of Community Power," in *Theories of Urban Politics*, ed. Jonathan S Davies and David L Imbroscio (Los Angeles: Sage, 2009), 31.

[2] Mike Geddes, "Marxism and Urban Politics," in *Theories of Urban Politics*, ed. Jonathan S Davies and David L Imbroscio, 2nd ed. (Los Angeles: Sage, 2009), 55, http://site.ebrary.com/id/10420160.

[3] Christopher Pickvance, "Marxist Theories of Urban Politics," in *Theories of Urban Politics*, ed. David Judge, Gerry Stoker, and Harold Wolman (London: SAGE, 1995), 254.

[4] Geddes, "Marxism and Urban Politics," 59–62.

South.[5] Scholarship applying Marxist insights to questions of urban development and built form include early and substantive contributions by David Harvey[6] and Richard A. Walker.[7] From the diverse Marxist work being done today, analyses of smart growth can extend from current critiques of neoliberalism, of which smart growth approaches can be seen as an extension,[8] and from research on gentrification and working-class displacement.[9]

Social movement theory has examined the causes, practices, and effects of social mobilization. As Gordana Rabrenovic explains, Manuel Castells's early description of urban social movements focused on urban conflicts that made "fundamental changes in power relations at the urban and societal levels," but scholarly understanding of urban social movements has expanded "to include other, less radical, examples of popular organising and direct political participation, such as grassroots citizen initiatives, ethnic self-help organisations, community based developments and service delivery programmes, as well as locally focused political

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[5] Ibid., 68.

[6] David Harvey, *Social Justice and the City*, Revised, Geographies of Justice and Social Transformation 1 (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2009).

[7] Richard A. Walker, "A Theory of Suburbanization: Capitalism and the Construction of Urban Space in the United States," in *Urbanization and Urban Planning in Capitalist Society*, ed. Michael Dear and Allen Scott (New York: Methuen, 1981), 383–429, http://geography.berkeley.edu/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/Walker_18.pdf.

[8] Rob Krueger and David Gibbs, "'Third Wave' Sustainability? Smart Growth and Regional Development in the USA," *Regional Studies* 42, no. 9 (November 1, 2008): 1263–74, doi:10.1080/00343400801968403.

[9] Tom Slater notes that, until the late 1980s, academic scholarship on gentrification was overwhelmingly critical of gentrification and rooted in Marxist/structuralist analysis. Tom Slater, "The Eviction of Critical Perspectives from Gentrification Research," *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 30, no. 4 (2006): 741, doi:10.1111/j.1468-2427.2006.00689.x.

advocacy."[10] There has been substantial scholarly interest in social mobilization both in favour

of and against smart growth policies in different communities.[11]

Urban political economy approaches, centred around growth machine theory and regime

theory, arose out of a reaction to more determinist approaches to urban development popular in

the 1950s. Community power theorists responded by insisting on the importance of studying

"collective urban decision-making processes."[12] The responses came mostly through pluralism

or elite theory. These approaches disagreed about how to look for power, and thus disagreed

about who actually wielded it in urban environments, but they agreed that "power … was

ultimately a property of people, not of abstractions."[13] Pluralists like Robert Dahl[14] focused on

the various groups that could influence specific important decisions, while the neo-elitists[15] that

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[10] Gordana Rabrenovic, "Urban Social Movements," in *Theories of Urban Politics*, ed. Jonathan S. Davies and David L. Imbroscio, 2nd ed. (Los Angeles: Sage, 2009), 239–40, http://www.library.yorku.ca/e/resolver/id/1895170.

[11] Lenahan O'Connell, "The Impact of Local Supporters on Smart Growth Policy Adoption," *Journal of the American Planning Association* 75, no. 3 (2009): 281–91, doi:10.1080/01944360902885495; Eliot M. Tretter, "Contesting Sustainability: 'SMART Growth' and the Redevelopment of Austin's Eastside," *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 37, no. 1 (January 1, 2013): 297–310, doi:10.1111/j.1468-2427.2012.01166.x; Hamil Pearsall, "Superfund Me: A Study of Resistance to Gentrification in New York City," *Urban Studies* 50, no. 11 (August 1, 2013): 2293–2310, doi:10.1177/0042098013478236.

[12] Harding, "The History of Community Power," 29.

[13] Harding, "The History of Community Power."

[14] Robert Alan Dahl, *Who Governs?: Democracy and Power in an American City*, 2nd ed., Yale Studies in Political Science (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005).

[15] Peter Bachrach and Morton S. Baratz, "Two Faces of Power," *The American Political Science Review* 56, no. 4 (1962): 947–52, doi:10.2307/1952796.

followed Floyd Hunter[16] focused on the concentrated elites who decide whether something becomes a decision at all.[17] Ensuing debates centred on questions about how the suppression of conflict could be observed.[18]

Harding notes that most treatments consider the community power debates to have died after the neo-elite critiques of Dahl, and tend to attribute the rise of urban political economy approaches to a much more explicit reaction to the public choice approach taken by Paul Peterson in *City Limits*.[19] But Harding argues that urban political economy approaches arose, as well, out of the methodological individualist turn in the community power debates: particularly, in the form of the growth machine thesis and urban regime theory.[20]

The growth machine thesis, Harding suggests, is "is a modernised elite theory approach."[21] It is exemplified by Logan and Molotch, who explicitly aimed to extend David Harvey's insights by creating more room for agency. They found that Harvey's work lacked a focus on particular actors, and that "the Marxian frame … seemed brittle in its determinism" as "the roll-out toward capitalist accumulation explained too much of everything."[22]

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[16] Hunter, Floyd, *Community Power Structure: A Study of Decision Makers* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1953).

[17] Harding, "The History of Community Power," 31.

[18] R. A. Young, "Review: Steven Lukes's Radical View of Power," *Canadian Journal of Political Science / Revue Canadienne de Science Politique* 11, no. 3 (1978): 639–49.

[19] Harding, "The History of Community Power," 34; Paul E. Peterson, *City Limits* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1981).

[20] Harding, "The History of Community Power," 33.

[21] Ibid.

[22] John R. Logan and Harvey Luskin Molotch, *Urban Fortunes: The Political Economy of Place*, 20th anniversary ed. (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2007), viii.

In applying Marxist insights to the urban environment, the growth machine thesis suggests that cities are sites of competition between those who wish to live in the city, and thus care about its use value, and those who wish to make money off the city, and thus care about its exchange value.[23] These latter actors, whom Logan and Molotch describe as rentiers, are the elites who generally benefit from growth, at the expense of those who are concerned with the city's use value. As Molotch writes, "a common interest in growth is the overriding commonality among important people in a given locale," and "this growth imperative is the most important constraint upon available options for local initiative in social and economic reform."[24] He concludes from this that "the very essence of a locality is its operation as a growth machine."[25]

Regime theory, Harding argues, arose out of neo-pluralist approaches.[26] Stoker explains that "regime theory takes as its starting point many of the concerns of 'neo-pluralists,'" such as "the privileged position of business," "the limits to effective democratic politics," and "fragmentation and complexity of governmental decision-making."[27] Harding suggest, however, that regime theory has been more effective than earlier growth machine work at addressing why it is that local actors in positions of power focus on creating growth.[28]

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[23] Logan and Molotch, *Urban Fortunes*.

[24] Harvey Molotch, "The City as a Growth Machine: Toward a Political Economy of Place," *American Journal of Sociology* 82, no. 2 (1976): 310.

[25] Ibid.

[26] Harding, "The History of Community Power," 33.

[27] Gerry Stoker, "Regime Theory and Urban Politics," in *Theories of Urban Politics*, ed. David Judge, Gerry Stoker, and Harold Wolman (London: SAGE, 1995), 56–57.

[28] Harding, "The History of Community Power," 36.

Based on both early[29] and subsequent work,[30] Clarence N. Stone is the most central figure in urban regime theory. Stone argues that "regime is specifically about the *informal arrangements* that surround and complement the formal workings of government authority."[31] In his work on Atlanta, Stone finds a regime, meaning "an informal yet relatively stable group *with access to institutional resources* that enable it to have a sustained role in making governing decisions."[32] A regime is a particular type of informal group that "is purposive, created and maintained as a way of facilitating action,"[33] with a "governing coalition" that is "a core group – typically a body of insiders – who come together repeatedly in making important decisions."[34]

As Karen Mossberger describes, "For over two decades now, urban regime analysis has been one of the most prevalent approaches to the study of urban politics."[35] The approach has been used so broadly that sustained debates have arisen about whether its incisiveness is particular to the American urban environments from which it arose, or whether it can

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[29] Clarence N. Stone, *Regime Politics: Governing Atlanta, 1946-1988*, Studies in Government and Public Policy (Lawrence, Kan.: University Press of Kansas, 1989).

[30] Clarence N. Stone, "Urban Regimes and the Capacity to Govern: A Political Economy Approach," *Journal of Urban Affairs* 15, no. 1 (1993): 1–28; Clarence N. Stone, "It's More than the Economy after All: Continuing the Debate about Urban Regimes," *Journal of Urban Affairs* 26, no. 1 (2004): 1–19; Clarence Stone, "Reflections on Regime Politics: From Governing Coalition to Urban Political Order," *Urban Affairs Review* 51, no. 1 (2015): 101–37, doi:10.1177/1078087414558948.

[31] Stone, *Regime Politics*, 3.

[32] Ibid., 4.

[33] Ibid.

[34] Ibid., 5.

[35] Karen Mossberger, "Urban Regime Analysis," in *Theories of Urban Politics*, ed. Jonathan S Davies and David L Imbroscio (Los Angeles: Sage, 2009), 40.

successfully be used in other contexts,[36] and particularly in Canada.[37] Despite these debates, and fears that the concept has been excessively stretched,[38] it continues to be central to many mainstream studies of urban politics, and to the politics of urban development.

What They Don't Answer

Each of these three approaches has brought considerable insight into the politics of urban development, and several would provide interesting analyses when applied to the Waterloo case. I begin by describing what studies of the Waterloo case based on these three approaches might highlight. I then explain why none of these major approaches are ideally suited to addressing the central issues of my research question.

Undoubtedly, Marxist analyses of smart growth in Waterloo Region could provide various insights into issues of capital, class, and neoliberalism, and their expression in this case. Most obviously, the Region's engagement with various segments of the capitalist class in order to advance major urban redevelopment, the investment of public funds into an LRT project prized by business elites, and the use of a public-private partnership to build and operate the LRT can all clearly be seen to connect to the role of local government in managing the business needs of the capitalist class and operationalizing neoliberalism.

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[36] Ibid., 45–48; Jon Pierre, "Can Urban Regimes Travel in Time and Space? Urban Regime Theory, Urban Governance Theory, and Comparative Urban Politics," *Urban Affairs Review* 50, no. 6 (2014): 864–89, doi:10.1177/1078087413518175.

[37] Christopher Leo, "Are There Urban Regimes in Canada? Comment on: Timothy Cobban's 'the Political Economy of Urban Redevelopment: Downtown Revitalization in London, Ontario, 1993-2002,'" *Canadian Journal of Urban Research; Winnipeg* 12, no. 2 (Winter 2003): 344–48.

[38] Karen Mossberger and Gerry Stoker, "The Evolution of Urban Regime Theory: The Challenge of Conceptualization," *Urban Affairs Review* 36, no. 6 (July 1, 2001): 810–35, doi:10.1177/10780870122185109.

Social movement approaches are generally well suited to studying the question of how smart growth policies were adopted in Waterloo Region. Particularly, smart growth policies are only the most recent in a long line of growth management efforts in the Waterloo area, many of which were the sites of significant mobilization. While recent mobilization efforts around the LRT project are perhaps the most visible to the general public, extensive and ongoing mobilization from environmental groups in the area, in particular, have contributed to land use planning politics and policies over many years. A social movements-based study could be particularly valuable in the Waterloo case, and this area is a rich terrain greatly worthy of further study.

Regime theory is interested in how networks of government and business actors mobilize to meet goals and, in this case, smart growth goals. An urban political economy approach to the Waterloo case based on regime theory would focus on the networks within and beyond local governments that worked together to facilitate smart growth in Waterloo Region, and would put particular focus on business interests.[39] Given both the approach's prevalence and its strengths, it is unsurprising that regime analysis has been applied to at least a part of the Waterloo case already. Jesse Steinberg's work adds a constructivist analysis of ideas through policy frames to a

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[39] While a growth machine analysis would be possible, as well, it is a less likely candidate for this study than regime theory. While the implementation of smart growth can be seen as an expression of a growth machine, the growth machine thesis would be better suited to a broad commentary on the role that municipal politicians play in pursuing local growth, rather than a detailed account of the why particular politicians respond to and enact these expectations in a specific context. Aaron Moore also notes that regime theory has a broader conception of business interests than the growth machine model, which focuses exclusively on developers. Aaron A. Moore, *Planning Politics in Toronto: The Ontario Municipal Board and Urban Development* (Toronto, ON: University of Toronto Press, 2013), 18. Non-developer business interests are an important factor in my question about the Waterloo case.

coalition-focused approach based in regime theory to the case of Waterloo Region's LRT project and the history of downtown revitalization in Kitchener.[40]

Thus, capitalism, social movements, and business interests and networks have all played a crucial part in the adoption of smart growth in Waterloo Region, and studies focusing on these aspects of the Waterloo case could be both interesting and valuable. Yet none of these three approaches provide adequate purchase on what I find to be most interesting about the Waterloo case: the decisions made by regional councillors to persevere in the face of challenges to the Region's smart growth plans. Their behaviour shows a commitment to smart growth policies in the face of concrete challenges. My question, fundamentally, is about why and how these particular politicians came to embrace and defend smart growth.

None of these major approaches are ideally suited to explaining the actions of specific politicians in specific contexts. While Marxist approaches are well suited to multi-scalar concerns, they do not count micro-analysis among their strengths, even in their more recent and increasingly diverse variants. While Geddes highlights that a number of Marxist scholars have produced empirically rich work, he maintains that "The charge that Marxism is unable to translate meta-theory into robust micro-analysis remains a relevant warning for Marxists today."[41] In selecting an approach to explain why politicians made the choices they did, I need tools better suited to micro-analysis.

Social movement approaches can involve locally detailed analysis, and social mobilization can happen in a variety of ways around urban development and smart growth. But a

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[40] Jesse Steinberg, "The 'Consensual' Politics of Transit Infrastructure Policy in Kitchener, Ontario" (Paper presented to the Canadian Political Science Association conference, June 2013), https://www.cpsa-acsp.ca/papers-2013/Steinberg.pdf.

[41] Geddes, "Marxism and Urban Politics," 68.

social movement approach would focus attention on social mobilization in the Waterloo case. Given my research question, social movements are crucial, but we would expect them to be part of what affects politicians' decision-making. My research question demands that I account for social mobilization, but that I centre politicians and their responses to or involvement in social mobilization.

Given my interest in politicians themselves, an urban political economy approach based on regime theory would perhaps be the most likely candidate within these three approaches for my study, given its focus on networks of which politicians are a crucial part, as well as its popularity. Yet, as Steinberg's attempt to make more room for ideas suggests, regime theory's focus on coalitions adds valuable insights, but obscures others. While a regime theory approach could examine the formation of coalitions and the exercise of power that business communities can wield within them, in the Waterloo case it would be complemented by an approach that can focus our attention on two considerations: politicians themselves, and how they form the goals that coalitions can allow them to pursue.

First, explanation of the Waterloo case can benefit from an approach that focuses on politicians themselves, not only their participation in networks. An explicit and central goal in this work is the exposition of the beliefs and actions of decision-makers within the constraints of municipal government and politics. Thus, while an assessment of the relationships between decision-makers and other actors with various kinds of power, and particularly business interests, will be a crucial part of the context for examining what has happened here, the main attempt is not to describe the network and its actions. It is to explain how a particular set of people understand their place in it and act accordingly.

Second, as Stoker says, regime theory focuses on "efforts to build more stable and intense relationships in order that governmental and non-governmental actors can accomplish difficult and non-routine goals," which means a focus on the creation of the capacity to act[42] and accomplish a certain set of goals. My question requires understanding something else, as well: how do actors come to hold specific goals? To answer this question, I cannot presume that goals are pre-existing. As Harding argues, regime theory has helped to explain why local governments support both increasing growth and growth coalitions, based on the uneven distribution of access to resources and different kinds of power.[43] I am interested in how specific decision-makers might develop and act upon the same or different goals when it comes to growth management. This is of particular interest in the case of municipal politicians, who often find themselves making decisions about growth management despite having gotten involved in politics for other reasons. Thus, while regime theory approaches would be, and have been, valuable in the Waterloo case, I need an approach that allows me to add to its insights: one that focuses on the way that politicians adopt, modify, and act upon diverse beliefs.

In summary, all of these approaches are valuable, and would provide valuable insights when applied to the context of the Waterloo case. Neoliberal capitalism, social mobilization, and networks are all crucial parts of the context of smart growth in Waterloo Region. But given my research question, I want to know why these politicians made these decisions. This requires connecting these crucial contextual factors to politicians themselves. I want to understand how politicians come to think about these factors, and make decisions as a result. Capitalism, social

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[42] Stoker, "Regime Theory and Urban Politics," 59.

[43] Harding, "The History of Community Power," 36–37.

movements, and business-focused networks are all crucial. But they are all factors that must be navigated by individual politicians.

Focusing on Politicians' Agency in Context

In the Waterloo case, it is the views and decisions of the politicians themselves that I find most interesting. I want to explain how regional council came to support smart growth policies, and why it chose to defend them against two major challenges.

Beyond my own curiosity, a review of the literature on agency in urban political economy and the literature on local politicians in Canadian political science shows that the agency of individual politicians within institutions is an area in need of further study. Agency has been a persistent concern for those studying urban growth, and agency and leadership of local politicians is a crucial but understudied area in Canadian political science.

Agency in the Urban Political Economy Approach

Agency has been a central question in the development of the urban political economy approach. As noted above, an explicit aim of the development of urban political economy approaches was an attempt to get away from overly deterministic approaches to understanding urban development that preceded them, whether in the form of Marxian urban studies or the market determinism of the neoclassical economists.[44] The urban political economy approach introduces substantial room for the consideration of human agency in the study of the politics of land use. Yet even with the considerable progress this approach makes by focusing on interests and not just structures, its contribution to the consideration of agency deserves to be built upon further.

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[44] Logan and Molotch, *Urban Fortunes*.

In his study of Toronto development politics and the Ontario Municipal Board, Aaron

Moore refers to the urban political economy scholarship outlined above as the Local Political

Economy (LPE) approach, which he describes as mostly comprised of growth machine theory

and urban regime theory.[45] Moore suggests that in its "basic elements and assumptions," the LPE

approach focuses

> on the self-interest of political actors, the resources that they command, and the
> incentive structures that develop from the confluence of their self-interest, resources,
> and broader structures and institutions that direct or limit politics, such as the free
> market and the relationship between municipal government and higher levels of
> government.[46]

Moore explains that both structuralist and behaviouralist lenses within the LPE literature

"focus on the interest of particular political actors, and the institutional and socio-economic

constraints that shape their behaviour."[47] He notes that "the LPE approach portrays the

development industry's main goal as developing property for profit," and thus "developers form

relationships with local politicians, using their wealth to do so, because the latter make the final

decision on whether development projects will or will not proceed."[48] Developers are most often

opposed by citizens organized into neighbourhood associations, and such citizens "target local

politicians in order to prevent development."[49] Thus "[p]oliticians … have a choice between

working with developers or working with citizens," and developers are most often the ones they

choose, and though the reasons that politicians choose them are open for debate, the arguments

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[45] Moore, *Planning Politics in Toronto*, 16.

[46] Ibid., 11.

[47] Ibid.

[48] Ibid.

[49] Ibid.

raised in the literature center around their need for developers' resources.[50] Nevertheless, Moore

notes that "a growing body of literature suggests that politicians will choose to work with"

citizens rather than "business."[51]

This disagreement belies a broader issue. While scholars using this approach might

disagree about the broader trends in with whom local councils side, as Moore suggests, and the

reasons why those trends might be happening across cases, there is a limit to what we know

about why politicians make such choices in specific cases.

In a related problem, the approach's broad focus on interests can leave them inadequately

problematized. Many accounts of interests, particularly from rational choice and pluralist

perspectives, often assume both that political actors pursue their interests, and that those interests

can be objectively and reliably identified. Yet there are occasions when politicians make

decisions that seem, on the surface, surprising. Elected officials facing a similar set of constraints

and with similar interests sometimes make different choices, and these different choices shape

the context and form of future decisions that they and others make. We need to understand the

mechanisms through which these differences arise, which means accounting not just for the

supposedly objective interests that elected officials hold, but also for the way in which elected

officials come to understand those interests and the competing pressures and concerns that they

regularly face. Since Logan and Molotch acknowledge the relevance of factors like ideology,[52]

"social ties,"[53] and sentiment,[54] they are well aware that slippery and contingent factors are

significant in the politics of development.

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[50] Ibid., 12.

[51] Ibid.

[52] Logan and Molotch, *Urban Fortunes*, 85.

[53] Ibid., 83.

Institutions and market forces significantly structure the interests of actors in the politics of local development. Yet interests are necessarily mediated through the experience, interpretation, and the unique positioning of particular actors in specific contexts. While the LPE approach recognizes that elected officials must negotiate their support for competing actors in conflicts over local development, this raises the question of how, exactly, they decide. How do local politicians come to understand the choices involved in managing the politics of development?

Politicians in the Canadian Political Science Literature on Local Politics

So the LPE literature suggests that an interest in politicians' agency is warranted. The Canadian political science literature on local politics agrees, and suggests not only that agency is important, but in particular, that political leadership matters, and needs more systematic and theoretically rigorous attention.

Scholars of local politics have long been interested in elected officials. In the 1960s, Robert Dahl asked *Who Governs*,[55] and his work is widely seen as the start of a substantial pluralist local politics literature in the American tradition. As suggested above, this tradition, and "neo-elitist" responses to it, has generated enormous interest in "accounts" that "take human agency seriously."[56] Logan and Molotch want to add to Dahl's question: not only who governs, but for what?[57]

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[54] Ibid., 99.

[55] Dahl, *Who Governs?*

[56] Harding, "The History of Community Power," 33.

[57] Logan and Molotch, *Urban Fortunes*, 50.

Yet, in the context of the study of local politics in Canadian political science, limited attention has been paid to the detailed motivations and actions of elected officials themselves. One of the gaps Zack Taylor and Gabriel Eidelman identify in the Canadian literature on local politics is the lack of study of "local political leadership."[58] They note that "Leaders are idiosyncratic, their agency difficult to model, yet they can play a pivotal role in shaping local debates and political choices."[59] There are some exceptions to this gap, and Taylor and Eidelman identify some central studies in this area. One is Timothy Colton's classic work on Frederick Gardner, the first chair of Metro Toronto.[60] Another is Tom Urbaniak's more recent work on long-time Mississauga mayor Hazel McCallion.[61]

Given my research question, and my intention to take both the politics of land use and the agency of politicians seriously, I must extend my focus beyond the head of council. While Taylor and Eidelman name some of the few studies that have been conducted on individual formal leaders, like mayors and other heads of council, leadership is often a communal affair. In Ontario's weak mayor system, most heads of council must build consensus around their goals to be effective. While mayors have additional institutional resources and symbolic power at their disposal, it cannot be assumed that specific heads of council are playing the most important role, or the only important role, in shaping specific debates and political choices.

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[58] Zack Taylor and Gabriel Eidelman, "Canadian Political Science and the City: A Limited Engagement," *Canadian Journal of Political Science/Revue Canadienne de Science Politique* 43, no. 04 (2010): 974.

[59] Ibid.

[60] Timothy J. Colton, *Big Daddy : Frederick G. Gardiner and the Building of Metropolitan Toronto* (University of Toronto Press, 1980).

[61] Tom Urbaniak, *Her Worship : Hazel McCallion and the Development of Mississauga* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2009).

In focusing my analysis through the members of the Region of Waterloo's council, I aim to highlight the agency of elected officials as they create and negotiate complex beliefs and competing constraints in the politics of land use. In short, politicians are people. Municipal politicians, in particular, make decisions in particular contexts under significant constraints, but this does not mean that they do not retain agency in responding to and enacting those constraints. Beyond simply reconstructing the specific actions taken by specific political leaders, I aim to bring attention to the agency of municipal decision-makers, and particularly elected officials, within the fairly constrained institutional environment described by the LPE approach.

Specific Literatures Relevant to the Project

Given my intention to consider the agency of politicians in constrained contexts in the Waterloo case, my work compliments existing studies of growth management, transit, and municipal politics in Waterloo Region. Beyond Waterloo Region, this project sits at the intersection of three main literatures.

Studies of Waterloo Region

A number of existing studies have examined Waterloo Region as a rich locale for study. Most relevant to my work, within the discipline of planning, built form and related policies in Waterloo Region have been examined by scholars like Pierre Filion, Trudi E. Bunting, and Kevin Curtis.[62] Julie Bélanger's master's thesis examined public communication strategies for

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[62] Pierre Filion, Trudi E. Bunting, and Kevin Curtis, *The Dynamics of the Dispersed City: Geographic and Planning Perspectives on Waterloo Region*, Department of Geography Publication Series ; No. 47 (Waterloo, Ont: Dept. of Geography, University of Waterloo, 1996).

public transit projects using the Region of Waterloo's ION LRT project as its case.[63] Within

political science, Jack Lucas's recently published dissertation on special purpose bodies uses

Kitchener, Ontario as its key case study, and provides a detailed overview of the history of

municipal service provision and changes in local government over time in Waterloo Region.[64]

Jesse Steinberg, in a paper for the Canadian Political Science Association Annual Conference,

examines "the multi-scalar constitution of sustainable infrastructure policy," particularly with

respect to public transit infrastructure investment, by looking at the Region's LRT project.[65]

From a health policy perspective, Jessica Wegener and her colleagues assess food system

policymaking in Waterloo Region, including the role of the Regional Growth Management

Strategy,[66] a topic addressed more completely in Wegener's dissertation.[67]

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[63] Julie Bélanger, "Improving Public Understanding of Large-Scale Transit Projects: A Case Study of the

Region of Waterloo's ION" (Master's Thesis, University of Waterloo, 2015),

https://uwspace.uwaterloo.ca/handle/10012/9439.

[64] Jon William Lucas, "Explaining Institutional Change: Local Special Purpose Bodies in Ontario, 1810-

2010" (Doctoral dissertation, University of Toronto, 2014); Jack Lucas, *Fields of Authority: Special Purpose*

Governance in Ontario, 1815-2015 (Toronto, ON: University of Toronto Press, 2016).

[65] Steinberg, "The 'Consensual' Politics of Transit Infrastructure Policy in Kitchener, Ontario."

[66] Jessica Wegener, Kim D. Raine, and Rhona M. Hanning, "Insights into the Government's Role in Food

System Policy Making: Improving Access to Healthy, Local Food alongside Other Priorities," *International Journal*

of Environmental Research and Public Health 9, no. 11 (November 2012): 4103–21, doi:10.3390/ijerph9114103.

[67] Jessica Wegener, "Multi-Sectoral Perspectives on Regional Food Policy, Planning and Access to Food: A

Case Study of Waterloo Region" (PhD, University of Waterloo, 2011),

https://uwspace.uwaterloo.ca/bitstream/handle/10012/6130/Wegener_Jessica.pdf?sequence=1.

Three Literatures

Beyond the academic scholarship specific to Waterloo Region and related to my topic, this dissertation sits at the intersection of three conceptual clusters of academic literature, specifically: [1] the politics of planning in Ontario, [2] smart growth, and [3] regional government.

The Politics of Planning in Ontario

The first cluster is the political science literature on the politics of planning in Ontario. A strong recent example is Aaron Moore's book on *Planning Politics in Toronto*, which highlights the effect of the Ontario Municipal Board on planning decisions made in the City of Toronto, and finds that the OMB's role accentuates the influence of expert planning staff in the planning process.[68]

Some research has focused directly on the role of the development industry in the context of Ontario municipal elections. Robert MacDermid considers the role of developer donations to municipal campaigns in Ontario.[69] His study examines campaign financing in 10 municipalities in the Greater Toronto Area during the 2006 municipal elections.[70] In eight out of the 10 municipalities he studies, he concludes that "The development industry is by far the most important financier of the majority of winning candidates' campaigns."[71] He also shows, in one of those municipalities, that elected officials had opportunities to vote on land use planning

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[68] Moore, *Planning Politics in Toronto*.

[69] Robert MacDermid, "Funding City Politics: Municipal Campaign Funding and Property Development in the Greater Toronto Area," Social Justice Series (The CSJ Foundation for Research and Education, 2009), http://www.socialjustice.org/uploads/pubs/FundingCityPolitics.pdf.

[70] Ibid., 9.

[71] Ibid.

decisions related to donors' interests. MacDermid highlights that municipal elected officials are already institutionally reliant, through legal and taxation arrangements, on the development industry,[72] and believes that municipal campaign finance arrangements, and particularly corporate donations, further limit elected officials' potential to oppose developer interests.

Other recent political science works examine broader issues of municipal government and governance in light of the effects of growth management politics. Zachary Spicer's recently published dissertation examines the arrangement between rural county governments and the separated cities within them in Ontario,[73] and concludes that "growth is threatening the continued viability of city-county separation."[74] Tom Urbaniak's in-depth study of Hazel McCallion attributes her lasting power and enormous influence to the politics of planning.[75] Urbaniak finds that McCallion's "dominant role" has depended on "a large suburban canvas that could accommodate major new development on scattered sites."[76] Beyond the most direct studies of the politics of land use in Ontario, these studies suggest that the efficacy of various government structures and particular elected officials is necessarily bound up in the powerful interests and on-the-ground pressures of the politics of development.

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[72] Ibid., 36–37.

[73] Zachary Spicer, "Regional Organization and the Dynamics of Inter-Municipal Cooperation" (Doctoral dissertation, University of Western Ontario, 2013), University of Western Ontario - Electronic Thesis and Dissertation Repository (Paper 1312); Zachary Spicer, *The Boundary Bargain: Growth, Development, and the Future of City-County Separation* (Kingston, ON: McGill-Queen's Press, 2016).

[74] Spicer, "Regional Organization and the Dynamics of Inter-Municipal Cooperation," ii.

[75] Urbaniak, *Her Worship*.

[76] Ibid., 240.

Smart Growth

The second conceptual cluster is the literature on smart growth, which has arisen since

the 1990s, particularly in the field of planning. In their often updated classic, which was among

the works most named by planners asked about works influencing professional development in a

2003 survey,[77] Gerald Hodge and David L. A. Gordon place smart growth in the context of "the

Evolution of Canadian Planning Ideas."[78] Hodge and Gordon describe smart growth as being at

the intersection of concerns in the planning profession over the environment and over "city

efficiency."[79]

Smart growth[80] is one way in which practitioners have tried to apply the goals of urban

sustainable development in practice.[81] While it is only one of three main ways that Edward J.

Jepson and Mary M. Edwards identify that planners use to try to put these principles into

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[77] Pierre Filion, Robert Shipley, and Zeralynne Te, "Works Planners Read: Findings from a Canadian Survey," *Canadian Journal of Urban Research* 16, no. 1 (2007): 59+.

[78] Gerald Hodge and David L. A. Gordon, *Planning Canadian Communities: An Introduction to the Principles, Practice, and Participants*, 6th ed. (Toronto: Nelson Education, 2014), 111.

[79] Ibid.

[80] While the concept of urban sustainable development may be more generally common today, and envelop a broader range of evolving approaches, I continue to use the phrase "smart growth" to describe the broad range of commitments that the Region of Waterloo has made to change its urban planning in order to grow up instead of out. I make this choice because the concept of smart growth arose in the historical moment in which this policy direction was formed, and thus is still the best reflection of the policies studied here, even if the term has fallen somewhat out of fashion in some circles.

[81] Edward J. Jepson Jr. and Mary M. Edwards, "How Possible Is Sustainable Urban Development? An Analysis of Planners' Perceptions about New Urbanism, Smart Growth and the Ecological City," *Planning Practice & Research* 25, no. 4 (August 2010): 417–37, doi:10.1080/02697459.2010.511016.

practice, it was the one that they found planners defined most broadly as recently as 2010, and it encompassed more of the features of sustainable development than either new urbanism or ecological city approaches.[82]

With their influential contribution to the urban political economy literature in the 1980s, discussed above, sociologists John R. Logan and Harvey L. Molotch preceded the rise of smart growth approaches by a number of years. But in the preface to the 20th anniversary edition of *Urban Fortunes: The Political Economy of Place*, Logan and Molotch address the more recent popularity of smart growth cautiously, suggesting "It could be just the same old growth machine with a decorative skin."[83] They argue that developers have an interest in higher rents, that it is this interest that leads to density, and that even the areas that have had the most success with smart growth have "growth machine activists" who fight development restrictions at whatever level of government is most likely to support their interests.[84] They continue,

> The devil is in the details. To what extent do urban regulators actually hang tough? In what ways do requirements for environmental sustainability go beyond the trivial? … Most importantly, to what extent will these local initiatives 'scale up' to influence national legislation and world-level agreements? Can acting locally really have global results?[85]

In the end, they prefer a no growth approach to a smart growth approach, at least as a default assumption.[86] Others have also used growth machine theory to critique the politics of smart growth.[87]

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[82] Ibid.

[83] Logan and Molotch, *Urban Fortunes*, xx.

[84] Ibid.

[85] Ibid., xxi.

[86] Ibid., xxii.

From a planning perspective, in his 2003 piece, Pierre Filion's work suggests that Logan and Molotch are right to be skeptical about smart growth. Filion points out that, since the 1970s, attempts to change the predominant form of development have not had much of an effect.[88] He argues that "The origin of the concept" of smart growth "can be seen as a response to the no-growth movement," which "reflected the view… that the disadvantages of urban expansion outweigh its advantages."[89] While in the early 20th century growth was seen as a necessary and positive feature for metropolitan areas and their downtown cores, in the post-war period suburbanization mostly did not bring added value to existing areas as new developments started to replicate, rather than add diversity to, existing amenities and features.[90]

In contrast to the no growth movement, smart growth suggests that growth itself does not have to be a bad thing. Instead, changes to how it is executed can improve its effects.[91] Filion explains, "In a climate of growing disillusion about sprawling urbanization, smart growth puts forth the highly optimistic assumption that a more informed and thoughtful approach to development will yield on its own considerable advantages without causing anyone much grief."[92] "Seen in this light," he continues, "smart growth appears to involve a readjustment of

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[87] Parke Troutman, "A Growth Machine's Plan B: Legitimating Development When the Value-Free Growth Ideology Is under Fire," *Journal of Urban Affairs* 26, no. 5 (December 1, 2004): 611–22, doi:10.1111/j.0735-2166.2004.00217.x; Eliot Tretter, "Sustainability and Neoliberal Urban Development: The Environment, Crime and the Remaking of Austin's Downtown," *Urban Studies* 50, no. 11 (2013): 2222–37, doi:10.1177/0042098013478234.

[88] Pierre Filion, "Towards Smart Growth? The Difficult Implementation of Alternatives to Urban Dispersion," *Canadian Journal of Urban Research* 12, no. 1 (2003): 49.

[89] Ibid., 50.

[90] Ibid., 51.

[91] Ibid.

[92] Ibid., 52.

urban development rules that does not pit interest groups against each other; it is depicted as a way of improving urban development while reducing resource requirements."[93] He notes that the generality of the concept of smart growth has been used to advocate for or justify a broad range of practices.[94] In the end, Filion suggests that "to escape the fate of earlier proposals, smart growth must avoid running counter to a widely shared attachment to urban dispersion and to powerful groups with an economic interest in this form of development."[95]

It is fair to say, then, that the flexibility of smart growth approaches is both their strength and their weakness. They can adapt to a variety of projects and goals without alienating powerful development interests. At the same time, not truly challenging those interests can significantly limit the extent of the change that they are able to make.

Regional Government and Local Government Reform

The third conceptual cluster is the extensive work done on regional government and local government reform, particularly in the Ontario context, by political scientists. The earliest attempt at a form of regional government in Ontario, with the introduction of Metropolitan Toronto in 1954,[96] excited interest in potential ways of dealing with the considerable spread of urban areas and enormous economic expansion, and the associated problems that these changes brought to local governments. As early as 1965, political scientists like Harold Kaplan were

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[93] Ibid.

[94] Ibid.

[95] Ibid., 65.

[96] David Siegel, "Municipal Reform in Ontario: Revolutionary Evolution," in *Municipal Reform in Canada: Reconfiguration, Re-Empowerment, and Rebalancing*, ed. Joseph Garcea and Edward C LeSage (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 2005), 127.

considering responses to post-war changes in how urban areas were organised.[97] The mass

production of the private car, coupled with growing middle-class affluence and its associated

demand for more dispersed housing, led to urban areas exceeding existing municipal

boundaries.[98]

Ontario political scientists had extensive interest in and documentation on the transition

to regional governments, particularly with an interest in administrative studies. Indeed, in the

1960s and early 1970s, political scientists were at times involved in these transitions

themselves,[99] or in other efforts to collaborate with practitioners on the topic.[100] Despite a

general lack of enthusiasm for further "municipal consolidation" across Canada from the middle

of the 1970s to the end of the 1980s,[101] municipal reorganization would again draw the attention

of local politics scholars in Ontario in the last decade of the 20th century. While efforts toward

municipal reorganization in the previous period had focused on capacity for action,[102] the

upheaval in the 1990s was spurred primarily by the period's focus on efficiency and cost savings.

The Progressive Conservative government of Mike Harris aimed to create larger governments

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[97] Harold Kaplan, *The Regional City: Politics and Planning in Metropolitan Areas* (Canadian Broadcasting Corp., 1965).

[98] Ibid., 3.

[99] See, for example, Stewart Fyfe and Ron. M. Farrow, "Report of Findings and Recommendations" (Toronto: Waterloo Area Local Government Review, 1970).

[100] University of Windsor, *Regional Government in Ontario: Proceedings of the Seminar on Regional Government Held at the University of Windsor, February 14th, 1970*, ed. Trevor Price (Richmond Hill, Ont: Simon and Schuster, 1971).

[101] Andrew Sancton, "Reducing Costs by Consolidating Municipalities: New Brunswick, Nova Scotia and Ontario," *Canadian Public Administration* 39, no. 3 (September 1996): 268.

[102] Ibid., 271.

with fewer municipalities and fewer elected officials, through municipal amalgamations. While such efforts began with the remaining county systems and northern municipalities that had not been converted to regional systems, the regional governments had become targets for change by the end of the decade.[103]

Changing municipal government arrangements in the 1960s and 1970s, and in the 1990s and early 2000s, have been the subject of considerable scholarship from Canadian municipal politics scholars, as Taylor and Eidelman note.[104] Specific to Ontario, scholars like David Siegel,[105] Andrew Sancton,[106] and Terrence Downey and Robert Williams[107] have all written generally about the sweeping changes to Ontario municipalities in these two phases.

More recently, municipal scholars have been concerned about the extent to which global 21st century problems affect "city-regions," which, like the Toronto area, "comprise dozens, or even hundreds, of municipalities."[108] As Andrew Sancton's 2008 work, *The Limits of Boundaries*, suggests, debates flourish over the right levels of autonomy for such regions, and

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[103] Siegel, "Municipal Reform in Ontario: Revolutionary Evolution," 132.

[104] Taylor and Eidelman, "Canadian Political Science and the City," 967.

[105] Siegel, "Municipal Reform in Ontario: Revolutionary Evolution."

[106] Andrew Sancton, "Local Government Reorganization in Canada since 1975" (Toronto, ON: Intergovernmental Committee on Urban and Regional Research, 1991), https://www.muniscope.ca/_files/file.php?fileid=fileQpPQqknESi&filename=file_Local_Government_reorganizatio n.pdf; Sancton, "Reducing Costs by Consolidating Municipalities: New Brunswick, Nova Scotia and Ontario"; Sancton, *Merger Mania*.

[107] Robert J. Williams and Terrence J. Downey, "Reforming Rural Ontario," *Canadian Public Administration/Administration Publique Du Canada* 42, no. 2 (1999): 160–92.

[108] Andrew Sancton, *The Limits of Boundaries: Why City-Regions Cannot Be Self-Governing* (Kingston, ON: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2008), 4.

the municipalities that comprise them, and how coordination across municipal boundaries should best be accomplished.[109] In some respects, this newer work is the 21st century equivalent of mid-20th century debates over regional municipalities. The scale of such coordination challenges, however, is larger, and they are now seen to take on global significance.

There has been considerable work, then, on Ontario planning politics, smart growth, and regional government structures. This project builds on the intersection of these three areas of study.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I reviewed three main approaches to the study of urban development, namely Marxist, social movement, and urban political economy approaches. While all three provide valuable insights into the politics of urban development, none are ideally suited to answering my question about politicians and smart growth in the Waterloo case. The literatures on urban political economy and local politicians in Canada suggest that the agency of politicians in significantly constrained circumstances is worthy of further study, which this dissertation undertakes. In so doing, this dissertation compliments existing scholarship on Waterloo Region, and builds on the intersection of three conceptual clusters in academic literature: the politics of planning in Ontario, smart growth, and regional government and local government reform.

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[109] Sancton, *The Limits of Boundaries*.

Chapter 2: Methodology

In Chapter 1, I identified the need for an approach to the study of urban development and smart growth in the Waterloo case that examines the agency of local politicians in the context of their constrained circumstances. In this chapter, I outline the approach I have chosen for this task, built on an interpretive approach outlined by Mark Bevir and Rod Rhodes.[1] I begin by explaining the main features of their philosophical approach, and highlight why such an approach is well suited to the study of urban politics. I then examine Bevir and Rhodes's treatment of institutionalism, and explain why exploring the possibilities of an interpretive institutionalism is valuable, despite their likely objections. I then outline my own approach to operationalizing their philosophical foundations, and describe the detailed research methods used in this study. Finally, I outline four additional benefits of my approach, and provide a detailed chapter breakdown of the rest of the dissertation.

Explaining Change: An Interpretive Approach to Institutions

To address the connection between institutions and agency, I base this study on the interpretive approach developed by political scientists Mark Bevir and Rod Rhodes. In this section, I describe the interpretive approach that Bevir and Rhodes use to examine what they call situated agency, and the three main concepts they use in their approach: belief, tradition, and dilemma. I then show that such an approach is well suited to the study of local politics. I then suggest that highlighting the continuities between Bevir and Rhodes's interpretive approach and

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[1] Bevir and Rhodes, *Governance Stories*; Bevir and Rhodes, *The State as Cultural Practice*; Bevir and Rhodes, *Routledge Handbook of Interpretive Political Science*.

new institutionalisms can be advantageous, despite Bevir and Rhodes's placement of their work in opposition to institutionalism.

Interpretive Approaches and Situated Agency

Bevir and Rhodes elaborate on their concept of situated agency in three main works: as the authors of *Governance Stories*[2] and *The State as Cultural Practice*,[3] and more recently as the editors of *The Routledge Handbook of Interpretive Political Science*.[4]

Bevir and Rhodes identify two main features of interpretive approaches. "First," interpretive approaches assume that "beliefs and practices are constitutive of each other," and that these should not be understood separately in "the search for a correlation or deductive link between the two."[5] Interpretive approaches suggest that "[p]ractices could not exist if people did not have apt beliefs," and "[b]eliefs or meanings would not make sense without the practices to which they refer."[6] "Second," they argue, "meanings or beliefs are holistic," and thus "[t]o explain an action, we cannot merely correlate it with an isolated attitude."[7] Instead, "we must interpret it as part of a web of beliefs and desires."[8]

Their approach is based on certain epistemological assumptions, which hold that we are not able to determine with certainty what is true about the outside world. For Bevir and Rhodes, positivist approaches like falsification and verification rely on the idea that "basic facts" can be

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[2] Bevir and Rhodes, *Governance Stories*.

[3] Bevir and Rhodes, *The State as Cultural Practice*.

[4] Bevir and Rhodes, *Routledge Handbook of Interpretive Political Science*.

[5] Bevir and Rhodes, *Governance Stories*, 2.

[6] Ibid.

[7] Ibid., 2–3.

[8] Ibid., 3.

defended because "we have pure experiences of the external world."[9] Their interpretive approach

rejects that notion, and relies instead on our ability to compare stories, and to critique one story

with others. In this context, "objectivity" is "evaluation by comparing rival stories using

reasonable criteria."[10]

Central to Bevir and Rhodes's approach is their insistence on situated agency. They do

not believe in autonomy, insofar as "people are always set out against the background of social

discourse or tradition."[11] Yet we "can still think of them as agents who can act and reason in

novel ways to modify this background."[12] Thus, "[a]gency is not autonomous. It is situated."[13]

To explore situated agency, and to explain persistence and change in light of it, the

authors rely on three main concepts: belief, tradition, and dilemma. First, beliefs are crucial,

since

> [t]o explain peoples' actions, we implicitly or explicitly invoke their beliefs and
> desires. When we reject positivism, we give up the possibility of identifying their
> beliefs by appealing to allegedly objective social facts about them. Instead, we give
> great prominence to the task of exploring the beliefs and meanings through which
> they construct their world.[14]

Though beliefs cannot be directly accessed, they can be "attributed to people by saying that

doing so best explains the evidence."[15]

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[9] Ibid., 27.

[10] Ibid., 28.

[11] Ibid., 4.

[12] Ibid.

[13] Ibid.

[14] Ibid., 6.

[15] Ibid., 24.

Second, the concept of tradition describes "the social context in which individuals both exercise their reason and act,"[16] and it is "the background against which individuals come to adopt an initial web of beliefs."[17] Bevir and Rhodes are careful not to suggest that traditions have deterministic influences over human agents; to the contrary, they insist that tradition is "mainly … a first influence on people. The content of the tradition will appear in their later actions only if their situated agency has not led them to change it, and every part of it is, in principle, open to such change."[18] In the absence of positivist reliance on "pure experiences," they maintain that "we need a concept such as tradition to explain why people come to believe what they do," and "people … necessarily construe their experiences using theories they have inherited."[19] As Bevir and Rhodes note, "Every time individuals apply a tradition, they have to understand it afresh in present-day circumstances. By reflecting on it, they open it to innovation. Thus, situated agency can produce change even when people think they are sticking fast to a tradition they regard as sacrosanct."[20]

Third, for Bevir and Rhodes, an important component of change is the concept of dilemma. "A dilemma," they explain, "is any experience or idea that conflicts with someone's beliefs and so forces them to alter the beliefs they inherit as a tradition."[21] Thus "[t]raditions

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[16] Ibid., 7.

[17] Bevir and Rhodes, *Routledge Handbook of Interpretive Political Science*, 17.

[18] Bevir and Rhodes, *Governance Stories*, 7.

[19] Ibid.

[20] Ibid., 8.

[21] Bevir and Rhodes, *Routledge Handbook of Interpretive Political Science*, 17.

change as individuals make a series of variations to them in response to any number of specific dilemmas."[22]

This commitment to agency and the way in which the concept of tradition relies on it means that the approach allows for "procedural individualism."[23] From Bevir's perspective, procedural individualism means that "meanings derive from the intentions of specific individuals and can be individuated exclusively by reference to those individuals."[24] In Hendrik Wagenaar's description, Bevir and Rhodes

> reject determinism and argue for an approach to explanation which favours grasping the meaning that actors attach to objects and events *and* reconstructing the historical path that has led the actors to have those meanings. This approach flies in the face of much political science thinking in which big entities external to the individual (economy, institution, state) determine in a usually unspecified way the beliefs, preferences, and actions of that individual.[25]

Such an interpretive approach is particularly well suited to the study of local politics. Much of the literature on municipal politics focuses on the relatively constrained position of local governments and their actors; common wisdom on Canadian municipalities often reduces them to "creatures of the provinces."[26] In an Ontario context, provincial legislation and regulation, limited revenue options, and bodies like the Ontario Municipal Board all mean that municipalities are indeed considerably restrained in their options. With regard to development

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[22] Bevir and Rhodes, *Governance Stories*, 9.

[23] Robert Lamb, "Historicism," in *Routledge Handbook of Interpretive Political Science*, ed. Mark Bevir and R. A. W. Rhodes (New York: Routledge, 2016), 80.

[24] Mark Bevir, "Meaning and Intention: A Defense of Procedural Individualism," *New Literary History* 31, no. 3 (2000): 396.

[25] Hendrik Wagenaar, "Policy Analysis," in *Routledge Handbook of Interpretive Political Science*, ed. Mark Bevir and R. A. W. Rhodes (New York: Routledge, 2016), 387.

[26] See Magnusson, "Are Municipalities Creatures of the Provinces?"

politics, in particular, local officials are constrained by an entire economic structure that presumes growth is necessary and the electoral and financial threats and incentives outlined by the contest between developers and various community groups. Yet the actions taken in response to these structural conditions vary widely across Ontario's 444 municipalities. An interpretive approach, with a focus on situated agency, allows local politics researchers to "reject autonomy" while "accepting agency," which means "people have the capacity to adopt beliefs and actions, even novel ones, for reasons of their own."[27] Thus it is possible to accept that municipal actors are significantly constrained, both by the traditions they inherit and the actions of others,[28] while also taking their choices and contexts seriously, and therefore to explain different outcomes despite similar constraints.

Indeed, Bevir and Rhodes note that their work has been used by a number of scholars of local politics.[29] Most of these examine local politics in the United Kingdom.[30] Most relevant to

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[27] Bevir and Rhodes, *Governance Stories*, 5.

[28] See Bevir and Rhodes, *Routledge Handbook of Interpretive Political Science*, 16.

[29] Mark Bevir and R. A. W. Rhodes, "Interpretivism and the Analysis of Traditions and Practices," *Critical Policy Studies* 6, no. 2 (July 1, 2012): 201–8, doi:10.1080/19460171.2012.689739.

[30] Ian Bache and Philip Catney, "Embryonic Associationalism: New Labour and Urban Governance," *Public Administration* 86, no. 2 (2008): 411–28, doi:10.1111/j.1467-9299.2008.00715.x; Adam Dinham and Vivien Lowndes, "Religion, Resources, and Representation," *Urban Affairs Review* 43, no. 6 (2008): 817–45, doi:10.1177/1078087408314418; Francesca Gains, "Narratives and Dilemmas of Local Bureaucratic Elites: Whitehall at the Coal Face?," *Public Administration* 87, no. 1 (2009): 50–64, doi:10.1111/j.1467-9299.2008.01741.x; Rob Krueger and David Gibbs, "Competitive Global City Regions and 'Sustainable Development': An Interpretive Institutionalist Account in the South East of England," *Environment and Planning A:* 42, no. 4 (2010): 821–37, doi:doi:10.1068/a42111; Kevin Orr, "Interpreting Narratives of Local Government Change under the Conservatives and New Labour," *The British Journal of Politics & International Relations* 7, no.

this project, in their only example of a study focused on the United States, they highlight David Gibbs and Rob Krueger, who apply the concepts of dilemmas, traditions, and beliefs to their study of the adoption of smart growth policies in the Boston city-region.[31] More broadly, Bevir and Rhodes's "decentred institutional analysis" also inspired L. Anders Sandberg, Gerda R. Wekerle, and Liette Gilbert in their impressive book on the Ontario government's Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan created in 2002, which the authors pursue using a "critical political ecology approach."[32]

Thus, not only does the interpretive philosophical framework developed by Bevir and Rhodes allow me to address situated agency in municipal politics, but it is also being used to examine questions of local politics, including smart growth and growth management policy.

Interpretivism and Institutionalism

Bevir and Rhodes are explicitly seeking to move away from institutionalism, along with behaviouralism and rational choice approaches, with their interpretive approach, and they

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3 (2005): 371–85, doi:10.1111/j.1467-856X.2005.00173.x; Kevin Orr, "Local Government and Structural Crisis: An Interpretive Approach," *Policy & Politics* 37, no. 1 (January 19, 2009): 39–55, doi:10.1332/147084408X349747; Kevin Orr and Russ Vince, "Traditions of Local Government," *Public Administration* 87, no. 3 (2009): 655–77, doi:10.1111/j.1467-9299.2009.01770.x; Helen Sullivan, "Interpreting 'Community Leadership' in English Local Government," *Policy & Politics* 35, no. 1 (January 23, 2007): 141–61, doi:10.1332/030557307779657775.

[31] David Gibbs and Rob Krueger, "Fractures in Meta-Narratives of Development: An Interpretive Institutionalist Account of Land Use Development in the Boston City-Region," *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 36, no. 2 (2012): 363–80, doi:10.1111/j.1468-2427.2011.01061.x.

[32] L. Anders Sandberg, Gerda R. Wekerle, and Liette Gilbert, eds., *The Oak Ridges Moraine Battles: Development, Sprawl, and Nature Conservation in the Toronto Region* (Toronto, ON: University of Toronto Press, 2013), 5–6.

intentionally propose it as an alternative to the positivism of these approaches.[33] On institutions,

specifically, they note that interpretivists

> do not conceive of particular traditions or practices as natural or discrete chunks of social reality. Traditions do not have clear boundaries by which we might make them discrete entities. They do not possess natural or given limits by which we might separate them out from the general flux of human life.[34]

They go on to say that "No abstract concept, such as a class or an institution, can properly

explain people's beliefs," since "people in the same situation can hold different beliefs because

their experiences of that situation can be laden with different prior theories."[35]

Despite Bevir and Rhodes having positioned interpretivism explicitly against

institutionalism, there are at least three reasons to think that interpretivism and institutionalism

are not as oppositional as they might initially appear. First, institutions like the Region of

Waterloo can productively be understood as what Bevir and Rhodes describe as practices. "A

practice," they explain, "is a set of actions, often a set of actions that exhibit a pattern, perhaps

even a pattern that remains relatively stable across time."[36] For them, "Once we leave the micro-

level for the macro-level, we think of social objects including the state as practices rather than

institutions, structures, or systems."[37] This can be a useful way to think about institutions, as it

emphasizes that institutions are not reified,[38] external objects with already defined boundaries. It

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[33] See Bevir and Rhodes, *Routledge Handbook of Interpretive Political Science*, 6–9.

[34] Bevir and Rhodes, *Governance Stories*, 17.

[35] Ibid., 3.

[36] Bevir and Rhodes, *The State as Cultural Practice*, 75.

[37] Ibid.

[38] See ibid., chap. 4.

focuses attention on the practices of the people within institutions, and therefore on the beliefs that are the basis for their actions.

Second, in practice, the line between institutionalist and interpretive approaches can be difficult to identify. The subject of study of interpretivist approaches can easily be institutions. In *Governance Stories*, Bevir and Rhodes themselves discuss the interpretation of conventional political institutions, including their analyses of the Westminster model,[39] "the 'Blair Presidency,'" the National Health Service, and the police.[40] Thus, while their interest is focused more intently through the lens of meaning, they themselves show that such approaches are appropriate to the study of particular types of institutions regularly studied by those practicing institutional approaches to political science.

Third, even in theory, institutionalist and interpretivist approaches can be seen as different places on the same continuum. To the extent that an institutionalist approach might separate institutions from the webs of meaning that surround and animate them, institutionalism is incompatible with interpretivism. Yet there is no reason to suppose that this abstraction must be a feature of all variants of the new institutionalism. The broad range of new institutionalisms push scholars to try to define institutionalism in broad terms. As Guy Peters states,

> The fundamental issue holding all these various approaches … together is simply that they consider institutions the central component of political life. In these theories institutions are the variable that explain political life in the most direct and parsimonious manner, and they are also the factors that themselves require explanation. The basic argument is that institutions do matter, and that they matter more than anything else that could be used to explain political decisions.[41]

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[39] Bevir and Rhodes, *Governance Stories*, 12.

[40] Ibid., 13.

[41] B. Guy Peters, *Institutional Theory in Political Science: The "New Institutionalism,"* 2nd ed. (London: Continuum, 2005), 164.

Thus the institutionalist umbrella that Peters sketches covers a great deal of diverse scholarship. Vivien Lowndes even describes "discursive institutionalism" as a variant of the new institutionalism that "sees institutions as shaping behaviour through frames of meaning."[42] Lowndes's inclusion of discursive approaches under the institutionalist umbrella would suggest that the addition of an interpretive institutionalism is not much of a stretch.

The biggest barrier to seeing a uniquely interpretive variant to institutionalist political science, then, is not the interpretivist's focus on webs of meaning. It is the a priori weight that new institutionalisms give to institutions. Bevir and Rhodes would object to assuming that institutions "matter more than anything else that could be used to explain political decisions."[43] They would almost certainly reject the idea that institutions are "the variable that explains political life in the most direct and parsimonious manner,"[44] given their rejection of more conventional cause-and-effect analyses of politics. Instead, they want to see institutions as one of the things that are to be explained with reference to the beliefs of situated agents.

Yet, as Bevir and Rhodes themselves suggest, an interpretive approach fundamentally rests on the concept of

> an undifferentiated social context, which researchers slice up to explain whatever set of beliefs or actions happens to interest them. Traditions are artefacts, always interpreted by the observer. Political scientists select a topic, and they ask which are the relevant traditions for explaining the objects thus covered.[45]

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[42] Vivien Lowndes, "New Institutionalism and Urban Politics," in *Theories of Urban Politics*, ed. Jonathan S Davies and David L Imbroscio, 3rd ed. (Los Angeles: Sage, 2009), 93, http://site.ebrary.com/id/10420160.

[43] Peters, *Institutional Theory in Political Science*, 164.

[44] Quoted in Lowndes, "New Institutionalism and Urban Politics," 93.

[45] Bevir and Rhodes, *Governance Stories*, 21.

In highlighting the connections between the diverse variants of new institutionalism,

Lowndes says, "new institutionalists contend that the greatest theoretical leverage to be gained is

by studying the institutional frameworks within which political actors operate."[46] Interpretivist

assumptions merely add that to study institutional frameworks is to study practices by examining

traditions, beliefs, and actions of specific people.

What does it mean, then, to slice that undifferentiated context with a focus on the

practices that we call institutions as a central component of webs of meaning? Viewed this way,

debates on the philosophical status of institutions may well engage a distinction without a

difference in certain studies, within which the question of ultimate allegiance to institutions or to

webs of beliefs might never be resolved.

Of course, despite their distaste for institutionalism, Bevir and Rhodes spend most of

Governance Stories effectively studying institutions.[47] I could proceed as Bevir and Rhodes do,

and examine webs of meaning in institutional contexts without addressing potential connections

with new institutionalisms. Yet there are three reasons I wish to explicitly outline my work

within the potential for an interpretive institutionalism. First, a more explicit institutionalist

allegiance can help bridge the divide between interpretive and more conventional approaches to

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[46] Lowndes, "New Institutionalism and Urban Politics," 93.

[47] This may be part of why, despite the considerations I have outlined in the preceding discussion, Krueger and Gibbs seem to insist on describing both their own work and Bevir and Rhodes's work as "interpretive institutionalism" without discussing that choice. They even state that Bevir and Rhodes "pioneered the theory and approach of interpretive institutionalism," citing their work to 2006. Krueger and Gibbs, "Competitive Global City Regions and 'Sustainable Development': An Interpretive Institutionalist Account in the South East of England," 824. In Krueger and Gibbs's defence, Bevir and Rhodes's more systematic repudiations of the new institutionalism and institutionalism more generally do not come until *The State as Cultural Practice*, published the same year.

political science that so concern Bevir and Rhodes. In order to meet their goals, they make a distinctive departure from their colleagues and do political science differently. In contrast, to meet my goals, I aim to draw connections. I want to highlight the ways in which political scientists are after the same things: productive explanations for patterns of outcomes in political life. I hope to momentarily set aside questions of philosophical differences, on which we will not agree, and expand the amount of work we can do with "the facts on which we agree."[48] It makes our stories more convincing to each other. From an interpretivist perspective, which assumes that the only assessment we can make about the truth of a story is by comparing it to rival ones, there is value in highlighting the degree of overlap between competing stories, even when those stories are about political science itself.

Second, it seems that others might just go ahead with defining and using their own interpretive institutionalisms, with or without the insights brought by a carefully developed notion of situated agency. The phrase "interpretive institutionalism" was used extensively as early as the late 1990s, in the book *Supreme Court Decision-Making: New Institutionalist Approaches*, edited by Cornell W. Clayton and Howard Gillman.[49] The volume uses the phrase "historical-interpretive variant" in public law scholarship to describe more recent, new institutionalist responses to rational choice-based examinations of institutions.[50] "Central to this approach," Clayton writes, "is the use of interpretive methodologies to describe the historic evolution of these institutionalized perspectives or patterns of meaningful action."[51] Their

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[48] Bevir and Rhodes, *Governance Stories*, 30.

[49] Cornell W. Clayton and Howard Gillman, eds., *Supreme Court Decision-Making: New Institutionalist Approaches* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999).

[50] Ibid., 31.

[51] Ibid., 32.

category is broad, and used to describe how interpretivism can consider how institutions help to form preferences.[52] While this contribution would seem to be early in the development of the concept of interpretivism, and does not follow the outline that Bevir and Rhodes would later sketch, it certainly foreshadows the tendency to apply these terms to other reactions against the dominance of behaviouralism within certain strands of political science.

A choice not to apply interpretive insights to institutionalism may mean an acceptance that others will use these ideas, or at least these terms, with less attention to the concerns that Bevir and Rhodes highlight. In short, it is important to stake a claim for situated agency in any potential 'interpretive institutionalism.'

Similarly, there may be gaps within the new institutionalist umbrella about meaning that may be filled without the insights of situated agency. While discursive institutionalist approaches, mentioned above, form part of the new institutionalism, they often fall too far on the side of structure to adequately account for agency. Hendrik Wagenaar, in his description of interpretive policy analysis approaches, draws a distinction between hermeneutic meaning and discursive meaning.[53] For him, "*Hermeneutic* meaning focuses on the way that individual agents move about against a background of shared understandings and routines; on how they interpret themselves in the light of it," while "*Discursive* meaning focuses on the taken-for-granted linguistic-practical frameworks, largely unnoticed by individual agents, that constitute the categories and objects of our everyday world."[54] Wagenaar, unsurprisingly, characterizes Bevir and Rhodes's work as falling within the hermeneutic tradition.[55]

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[52] Ibid., 67.

[53] Wagenaar, "Policy Analysis," 385–91.

[54] Ibid., 385.

[55] Ibid., 387–88.

The result of these different focuses, Wagenaar says, is that discursive approaches see "Meaning … as internal to discourse, not as the product of (the analyst's interpretation of) individual subjectivities."[56] This, he says, "lead[s] to an erosion of agency."[57] Bevir and Rhodes are similarly concerned about what they see as the overly deterministic character of poststructuralism. They argue,

> If a discourse claims to explain patterns of belief or speech, the implication is that the discourse fixes the content of the beliefs or intentions people can hold. What is more, if an interpretive approach uses discourse as an explanatory concept, it appears to adopt a determinism that barely can account for change. If individuals arrive at beliefs by a fixed and disembodied discourse, they lack the ability to modify that discourse. So any such changes appear inexplicable.[58]

Thus, viewed in this context, the disjuncture between an interpretive approach to institutionalism, following Bevir and Rhodes, and a discursive approach to institutionalism is a disagreement over the extent to which institutions are "'overdetermined.'"[59] A refusal to consider an explicitly interpretive variant of institutionalism, focused on situated agency, means ceding analyses of meaning under the new institutionalist umbrella to discursive approaches that are ultimately more determinist and structuralist.

In the end, Bevir and Rhodes are not solely hostile to the possibilities for an interpretive institutionalism based on their insights. Reflecting on the potential for positivist impulses to be overcome under institutionalism, they suggest:

> institutionalists may open the concept of an institution to incorporate meanings. They may conceive of an institution as a product of actions informed by the varied and contingent beliefs and desires of the relevant people. Interpretivists will welcome such a disaggregation of institutionalism. Even as they do so, however, they may

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[56] Ibid., 388.

[57] Ibid.

[58] Bevir and Rhodes, *Governance Stories*, 5.

[59] Lowndes, "New Institutionalism and Urban Politics," 93.

wonder whether we should still think of the approach as distinctively institutionalist in any significant sense. All the explanatory work would be done not by given norms but by the diverse ways people understood and applied them. Appeals to institutions would be a misleading shorthand for accounts of the beliefs and desires of the people who acted to maintain and modify the institutions in the way they did.[60]

In short, they suggest that institutionalism, when confronted with the insights of interpretivism, would lose the reason for its existence: the primacy of institutions.

Bevir and Rhodes have correctly identified the central problem. Despite their understandable scepticism, I believe we should not yet be ready to give up on the possibility of a truly interpretive institutionalism. It may be that interpretive approaches, applied fully to institutionalism, would make the institutionalist aspects of the approach invisible in both theory and practice. It may be that a distinctively institutionalist application of interpretive principles might, in fact, lend its own distinct approach. It is too early in the development of interpretive approaches to write off the possibilities of an interpretive institutionalism. It is simply too soon to take a final stand on the question of whether a distinctively interpretive institutionalism might be both possible and important.

A few short decades from now, practitioners of a more mature interpretive variant of political science may look back at my willingness to consider an interpretive institutionalism as naïve, or even quaint. Alternately, they may look back and see in this work, along with many others, the seeds of a distinct and important variant of new institutionalism. As Bevir and Rhodes so succinctly show in their own analysis of British political science,[61] the outcome will depend on the traditions that form through changes in our own beliefs and actions as we respond to new dilemmas.

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[60] Bevir and Rhodes, *Routledge Handbook of Interpretive Political Science*, 7.

[61] See Bevir and Rhodes, *Governance Stories*, chap. 3.

Like Bevir and Rhodes, I want to highlight human agency against a background of important constraints; I want to recognize the centrality of situated agency. Just as I believe there are strategic reasons to stress the discontinuity between an interpretivist institutionalism and discursive institutionalism, I believe there are strategic reasons to stress the continuity between new institutionalism and interpretivism. Consistent with the interpretive approach, "the justification for the way one constructs a tradition lies in the claim that this way best explains what interests one."[62]

In what follows, you will see the story that this choice allows me to tell, when I slice up our undifferentiated social context in this way. You will have the opportunity to compare my story to rival stories. Having done so, I believe that you will find that this account provides a compelling and useful explanation for what has happened in this case. I apply interpretive insights to a case within which the beliefs and actions of individuals have been heavily shaped by a particular set of traditions characterized by municipal government institutions. Whether this will prove to be a small contribution to the birth of a *new* new institutionalism, or an early death knell for the study of agency and meaning within the institutionalist tradition, will only be known in time. I have hopes for the former.

What I Did

In this section, I first highlight how I operationalize Bevir and Rhodes's philosophical foundation in the remainder of this dissertation, based on three sections: tradition, dilemmas, and webs of beliefs. I then detail the research methods used in this study, namely archival research, document review, and interviews.

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[62] Ibid., 21.

Operationalizing the Philosophical Foundation

Having established a philosophical foundation for this research, using Bevir and Rhodes's interpretive approach, I must apply their insights to my research question, which differs significantly from theirs. Bevir and Rhodes use their approach to examine the state and its development, and broad practices of governance. While their application of that approach is based in micro-level analysis of beliefs and actions of situated agents, the focus of their research is broadly conceptual.

My research, in contrast, is focused on explaining a particular outcome. Generally, I want to explain why the Region of Waterloo, and particularly its council, came to embrace smart growth. Specifically, my main research question is: why did the 2010 to 2014 regional council defend its smart growth plans, despite two major threats to those plans?

To operationalize Bevir and Rhodes's philosophical approach, this dissertation is written in three parts. Bevir and Rhodes explain that their interpretive approach "allows political scientists to offer aggregate studies by using the concepts of tradition and dilemma," while also allowing for "an analysis of change rooted in the beliefs and preferences of individual actors."[63] In this work, Parts I and II focuses on the former, while Part III focuses on the latter.[64]

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[63] Alan Finlayson et al., "The Interpretive Approach in Political Science: A Symposium," *The British Journal of Politics & International Relations* 6, no. 2 (May 1, 2004): 135, doi:10.1111/j.1467-856X.2004.t01-6-00131.x.

[64] In structuring this work in this way, I loosely follow the structure Bevir and Rhodes use in *Governance Stories*, which considers tradition in their first part and beliefs and actions in their second part.

Part I: Tradition

Part I covers tradition. As Bevir and Rhodes note, "Political scientists select a topic, and they ask which are the relevant traditions for explaining the objects thus covered."[65] Crucially, "A tradition," for Bevir and Rhodes, "is the ideational background against which individuals come to adopt an initial web of beliefs. It influences (without determining or – in a strict philosophical sense – limiting) the beliefs they later go on to adopt."[66]

Part I is told in the form of a historical narrative. Bevir and Rhodes note that "Historical narratives explain social phenomena not by reference to a reified process, mechanism, or norm, but by describing contingent patterns of action in their specific contexts."[67]

The historical narrative I present in Part I serves two closely related purposes. First, it contains its own explanation, insofar as it "explain[s] beliefs and actions by pointing to historical causes."[68] The story describes the actions and practices of various situated agents in a contingent historical period. This is broadly recognizable as consistent with work done in an institutionalist vein, and considers three distinct periods in chronological order.

Second, this historical narrative sketches the contours of a tradition. In Part I, I argue that the tradition of growth management and regional government in the Waterloo area is crucial for explaining regional council's commitment to smart growth.

The historical narrative I present in Part I necessarily differs from the way that Bevir and Rhodes examine the traditions that interest them, which are those related to broad concepts of the state and how it is understood. Some of the traditions that Bevir and Rhodes explicitly identify in

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[65] Bevir and Rhodes, *Governance Stories*, 21.

[66] Bevir and Rhodes, *The State as Cultural Practice*, 78.

[67] Ibid., 77.

[68] Bevir and Rhodes, *Routledge Handbook of Interpretive Political Science*, 17.

their work are broadly identifiable and well established, such as major British traditions of political science like modernist empiricism, socialism, and idealism.[69] And while they insist on holism, these traditions are ones that are already recognizable to a broad range of people as ideational backgrounds.

In contrast, the historical narrative of Part I shows the broad and varied contours of the tradition of regional government and growth management in Waterloo Region. This tradition is much more recent and much less cohesive than those examined by Bevir and Rhodes. Yet taken as a whole, Part I shows an ideational background upon which situated agents build and change their own beliefs, upon which they base their actions. If interpretive approaches focus on meanings with reference to situated agents, the meanings that are relevant for these situated agents have arisen, in large part, from the tradition of growth management and regional government in Waterloo Region.

Part II: Dilemmas

To apply Bevir and Rhodes's broad insights on beliefs and actions to my much more specific research question, I have to make two additional moves.

In Part II, I accomplish the first move by applying these insights to a specific set of decisions. To do so, I must consider the beliefs and actions of regional council as a group. Using the concept of dilemma to conduct an aggregate study, Part II looks at the beliefs and actions of the 2010 to 2014 regional council as a whole. It examines the dilemmas that arose, or did not arise, for regional council with respect to its continued defence of the light trail transit project and the Regional Official Plan.

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[69] See Bevir and Rhodes, *Governance Stories*, chap. 3.

Both in the practices that comprise municipal governments and in the parlance of my research question, it was regional council that made two crucial decisions which are the focal point of this research. Considering the dilemmas they faced as a group allows for a broad analysis of the pressures that group faced, and the specific political and technical context in which that group made those decisions.[70]

Considering the beliefs and actions of council as a group, by examining dilemmas, is also helpful for my goal of making connections between institutionalist approaches and Bevir and Rhodes's interpretive approach. While focusing on the beliefs and actions of situated agents, the group-based perspective of Part II is recognizable to those using more institutional approaches that tend to describe change as the result of "objective facts about the world."[71]

Part II, thus, makes the first move: it applies the concepts of Bevir and Rhodes's approach to specific decisions by examining the beliefs and actions of regional council as a group, using an analysis of the dilemmas that group faced, or did not face.

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[70] In so doing, I am determined to avoid a level of reification of which Bevir and Rhodes would not approve. I take their criticism of some institutionalist approaches seriously. "Institutionalists," they say, "sometimes adopt concepts such as dilemma or pressure to refer to the sources of change. They then equate such pressures with objective facts about the world rather than the subjective beliefs of policy actors. If they are to define pressures in this way, they need an analysis of how these pressures lead people to change their beliefs and actions." To avoid this problem, Part II is framed throughout as focusing on the subjective beliefs of policy actors, and the two chapters focus on the dilemmas that formed or did not form for regional council on the two major decisions that council made to protect its smart growth plans. Bevir and Rhodes, *The State as Cultural Practice*, 79.

[71] Ibid.

Part III: Webs of Beliefs

Part III accomplishes the second move that I need to make in order to apply Bevir and Rhodes's insights to the Waterloo case. In Part III, I examine the beliefs and actions of specific individuals. While Part II is a necessary component of explaining why regional council defended its smart growth plans in the face of these two challenges, it is ultimately not at a group level that beliefs and actions operate. Beliefs and actions are enacted, at a micro-level, by specific individuals.

Part III is comprised of 16 vignettes. In each, I tell a story about a specific regional councillor, and contextualize their own beliefs and actions on smart growth within their web of beliefs about growth management, regional government, and more. In doing so, I use a style of narrative writing that is not structured using chapters and arguments. Instead, I create a narrative portrait of each individual that provides the context to consider their beliefs and actions on growth management. The story in each vignette is structured around my interview with each person.

The form that I have chosen for these vignettes and the reasons for my choices are addressed in more detail at the beginning of Part III. Here, because of the crucial role that the interviews play in the stories of Part III, I wish to address a central concern that often arises about interviews, or more broadly about people's own accounts,[72] as sources of data. Interview subjects, as social scientists often fear, may be mistaken. Worse, they may lie.[73]

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[72] With respect to the debate over this problem in Bevir and Rhodes's own, albeit early, work, see Keith Dowding's contribution in Finlayson et al., "The Interpretive Approach in Political Science," 137–38.

[73] See Barbara Czarniawska-Joerges, *Narratives in Social Science Research*, Introducing Qualitative Methods (London: Sage Publications, 2004), chap. 4.

These concerns arise mostly when we assume that interviews are and should be reflections of the outside world. However, as Barbara Czarniawska-Joerges writes, "what people present in the interviews is but the results of their perception, their interpretation of the world, which is of extreme value to the researcher because one may assume that it is the same perception that informs their actions."[74]

From this perspective, concerns of mistaken or untruthful interview subjects are seen in a different light. As Bevir and Rhodes note,[75] people may indeed be mistaken in their interpretation of the world. Memory is unreliable, and people can have assumptions or recollections that are, in an objective sense, not true. Yet even when interview subjects are mistaken in their assumptions or recollections, the stories they share are reflective of what they believe, at that point in time. It is these beliefs that are relevant to my study.

The possibility of lying is perhaps more troubling, particularly for those of us who study politicians. It is commonplace to suggest that politicians are liars, or at least that they often work to obscure or 'spin' the truth in their own political interest.[76]

It is, of course, not possible to ensure that someone in an interview will not intentionally lie. Yet there are two reasons to believe that the narratives I have built in Part III are as insulated as possible from this problem. First, I do not rely solely on the interviews to determine factual

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[74] Ibid.

[75] They particularly reject rational choice approaches that assume agents have "perfect information," and instead rely on the notion of "local reasoning," which is local in that it is in the context of an individual's web of beliefs, and which "recognizes that agents can use only the information they possess, and they do just that even when the relevant information happens to be false." Bevir and Rhodes, *The State as Cultural Practice*, 74–75.

[76] See Stephen K. Medvic, *In Defense of Politicians: The Expectations Trap and Its Threat to Democracy* (Routledge, 2013).

questions about what these individuals have said and done. As described below, I use other third-party sources, many of them contemporary to past actions and statements, in order to verify and support the stories I present in Part III.

Second, Czarniawska-Joerges explains that the kind of obfuscation that arises in interviews does not usually take the form of lying. Since we should not, she argues, see interviews simply as a restatement of objective facts about the world, this means that

> An interview is not a window on social reality but it is a part, a sample of that reality. An interaction where a practitioner is submitted to questioning from an external source is typical, in the sense of being frequent, of the work of many people who, in a world of many and fast connections, have constantly to explain themselves to strangers: people from the overseas division, from another department, from the audit office, from a newspaper.[77]

Politicians, of course, are asked to explain themselves all the time, often to people who are keen to challenge them. Under such circumstances, we would expect many elected officials to become skilled at telling stories that give the best interpretation of themselves and their decisions. But in the end, this is not demonstrably different from what Czarniawska-Joerges describes as "a logic of representation," which she defines as "'presenting oneself in a good light.'"[78] This takes the form, as she says, of "dressing up for visitors."[79] But as Czarniawska-Joerges notes, "it would be both presumptuous and unrealistic to assume that a practitioner will invent a whole new story just for the sake of a particular researcher who happened to interview him or her. The narratives are well rehearsed and crafted in a legitimate logic."[80]

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[77] Czarniawska-Joerges, *Narratives in Social Science Research*, chap. 4.

[78] Ibid., 53.

[79] Ibid.

[80] Ibid., 49.

Thus, the stories told in Part III reflect what these situated agents told me about their beliefs and their motives. While background research is a crucial component of both the questions I asked in the interview and the narrative that I have written about it, as explained below, these vignettes explore well-rehearsed narratives and the logic that informs them.

In short, the vignettes examine the stories that these individuals tell about themselves, smart growth, and regional government. What they show is that, while part of the explanation for regional council's persistence is about the dilemmas they faced as a group, the beliefs and actions that comprise that group's behaviour are much more varied than Part II could ever show. Part III shows that individuals can "adopt beliefs and actions, even novel ones, for reasons of their own."[81] It also shows how the ideational background of the tradition outlined in the historical narrative of Part I is expressed through the beliefs that each of these individuals hold, as they modify that tradition in response to their own dilemmas.

Research Methods

While I have committed to an interpretive approach, and outlined broadly how I will operationalize it, it is still necessary to outline the choice of methods I will use to enact it in this case. As Bevir and Rhodes point out, a common misconception about interpretive approaches is that they rely on a particular set of methods, and cannot be applied, for example, using quantitative approaches.[82] "An interpretive approach," they argue, "rests on a philosophical analysis. This analysis does not prescribe a particular method of creating data."[83] Thus the methods I will use cannot be assumed from my epistemological and philosophical analysis.

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[81] Bevir and Rhodes, *Governance Stories*, 5.

[82] Ibid., 21–22.

[83] Finlayson et al., "The Interpretive Approach in Political Science," 157.

I use three main research methods for this project: archival research, document review, and interviews.[84]

Archival Research

I conducted archival research at the Region of Waterloo Archives, located in Kitchener, Ontario, in the County of Waterloo fonds (CW) and the Regional Municipality of Waterloo fonds (ROW). The files reviewed were in series CW 43-1, CW 43-2, ROW 3-6, ROW 3-13, ROW 64-3A, ROW 64-3B, and ROW 64-5. The files contained documents related to the history of local government reform[85] and growth management policies in the former County of Waterloo and the Region of Waterloo. These documents were located using searches in the Region of Waterloo Archives Online system,[86] and/or with the gracious assistance of the Archives staff.

Document Review

Beyond the relevant files located at the archives, I also completed a diverse document analysis. This focused on newspaper databases and government documents, as well as additional web sources.

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[84] In describing their methods for their study of governance, Bevir and Rhodes use ethnography, and explain that "historical accounts of traditions provide the principle form of explanation for the beliefs and actions recovered as ethnographic data." Bevir and Rhodes, *Governance Stories*, 89. While I use a historical account of a tradition for Part I, I do not use traditional ethnographic research, which is often assumed to involve a researcher's presence and formal observation during events, to examine beliefs and actions.

[85] It should be noted that, in designing the project, early exploratory document review suggested significant connections between land use planning politics and regional government structure, and this was the basis for including documentation on municipal structure in the analysis.

[86] Region of Waterloo, "Region Of Waterloo Archives Online," accessed January 18, 2017, http://row.minisisinc.com/scripts/mwimain.dll/1575?get&file=[row]intro.html.

Most systematically, I searched the Factiva database of the Waterloo Region Record, the area's longstanding daily paper, which contains complete articles going back to approximately 2001 and partial articles dating to approximately 1990.[87] Within this database, I searched the last name of each of the 16 regional councillors along with search terms relating to growth management, public transit, official plans, and regional government. I complemented these specific searches with a more general search of the database for stories that included professional or personal information about these 16 people. In total, these searches resulted in the collection of approximately 1000 relevant articles.

These articles were generally useful to cover historical details about the policies in question, but they were specifically useful to provide a systematic assessment of each councillor. I used qualitative coding software to code these full and partial articles for references to each of the 16 councillors, and used these results to compile a document for each councillor, which served as a timeline of their political careers, public aspects of their personal lives, and their involvement in and statements on growth management, light rail transit, and regional government. These single-spaced, bullet-point documents varied in length, based on the position the individual held and their length of public service, from 4 to 70 pages per councillor.[88]

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[87] Articles before 2001 are included in the Factiva database, but often are missing the very beginning of the article. While they still provide a great deal of information about events and reporting on the perspectives of the 16 councillors at the time of those events, they often require additional support, such as comparing different articles or research from other documents or interviews, to fill in the context that is missing.

[88] About three dozen additional articles were retrieved later in the research process, primarily to cover key events and to fill in gaps I identified as I went, as well as to address developments that occurred since I conducted the original searches. Unlike the approximately 1000 earlier articles, these were not coded.

This research served both as a direct source of information for the stories that follow, and as preparation for the interview with each councillor, since they form a reasonably robust account of the public reporting on their involvement with and perspective on these issues over the last 15 to 25 years.[89] Using a variety of relevant search terms for each councillor in such a large newspaper database, and examining all of the results, meant that this portion of the document analysis was fairly systematic, and allowed me to identify and examine events and councillor comments that I was not expecting to find.

Beyond the Factiva database and the Region's archives, I also analyzed a number of highly relevant government documents. Region of Waterloo documents included relevant council agendas, reports, videos, and minutes, as well as news releases, public submissions, official plans and their relevant amendments,[90] and promotional or other materials. These were primarily accessed online[91] or through relevant library holdings.[92]

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[89] Ideally the Factiva database of the Waterloo Region Record would go back farther, particularly given that there are a number of these 16 councillors who were in public office within the region as early as the 1970s. However, the period from 2001 to 2014 covers both the most recent involvement of all 16 councillors, and the development of the Regional Growth Management Strategy, the most recent Regional Official Plan, and the LRT project.

[90] Review of the most recent Official Plan, adopted by Council in 2009, also included review of the 2010 version modified and approved by the Province of Ontario, and the version that came into force in 2015 as a result of the negotiated settlement of the Ontario Municipal Board dispute.

[91] Online materials were either accessed directly, if they were currently on relevant websites, or using the Internet Archive. The non-profit Internet Archive provides public access to archived versions of millions of web pages, which I used in this case. The Internet Archive also offers a subscription service that is used by the Region of Waterloo Archives to formally archive its current website. "Archive-It: About Us," *Archive-It Blog*, accessed

Provincial government documents included provincial legislation and publications

relating to growth management policies, and documents relating to various local government

reviews in the area, accessed through library or web sources.

Other primary public documents resulting from government activities, particularly

relating to the history of local government reform in Ontario or Waterloo Region, were available

in paper form either as local or university library holdings, or through a personal collection of

public documents collected by a local municipal politics professor over several decades, which

were provided through a colleague.

Finally, additional reliable web sources were used to fill in information that originated

from neither newspapers nor governments. Examples include public opinion data collected by

public opinion firms on the LRT project, and the results of a local advocacy group's survey of

municipal election candidates.

Interviews

Finally, I conducted 21 interviews for this project. The interviews were semi-structured,

lasting between an hour and three hours, with most interviews lasting about an hour and a half.

Most of the interviews were conducted with regional councillors. I spoke with all 15

living members of the 2010 to 2014 regional council.[93] While questions varied by person based

on their different experiences with regional council and their own area municipalities, all

January 18, 2017, https://archive-it.org/blog/learn-more/; "Archive-It - Region of Waterloo Archives," accessed

January 18, 2017, https://archive-it.org/organizations/518.

[92] This was in addition to similar materials located in the Archives.

[93] Former regional councillor Claudette Millar died in February of 2016. Chris Pope, "Claudette Millar, the

First Mayor of Cambridge, Has Passed Away," *570 NEWS*, February 10, 2016,

http://www.570news.com/2016/02/10/claudette-miller-the-first-mayor-of-cambridge-has-passed-away/.

councillors were asked particularly about their experiences and views on the Regional Official

Plan, the decision to appeal the 2013 Ontario Municipal Board ruling, the light rail transit (LRT)

project, and the two-tier regional government arrangement in Waterloo Region. Additional

questions addressed how the councillors got involved in politics and their experiences in politics,

as well as relevant professional or personal experiences that arose in the course of the

conversation or as a result of the background research outlined above.

I also conducted interviews with six additional key informants to provide more technical

context on the policy issues and politics of growth management and regional government in the

Waterloo area, and to ensure that the strong voices of the regional councillors were not the only

living voices I would hear while researching such a multi-faceted and complex set of policy

issues. Four of these interviews were with current or former staff members of the Region of

Waterloo: the current Chief Administrative Officer; the then Commissioner of Planning,

Housing, and Community Services; the former Director of Community Planning (who was

seconded to the province to help write the Growth Plan in the mid-2000s); and the former

Manager of Strategic Policy Development and former Interim Director of Community Planning

and Manager of Reurbanization Planning. These individuals were selected based on their direct

involvement as regional staff members in the specific recent regional policies in question, in

each case over many years or decades.

I also conducted interviews with two individuals who were not municipal staff or

councillors, and who were involved in these policies from the outside. One is an award-

winning[94] environmental activist and advocate who has been instrumental in advocating for the

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[94] James Jackson, "A Green Champion," *Waterloo Chronicle*, March 16, 2016,

http://www.waterloochronicle.ca/news-story/6392786-a-green-champion/.

land use planning policies adopted in the Regional Official Plan. The other is a local farmer who has held various leadership roles with the Waterloo Federation of Agriculture and the Ontario Federation of Agriculture, and who has been an active advocate on growth management policies in the region for many years. They were included both for their environmental and agricultural policy expertise, respectively, and to complement the more institutionally situated views of regional councillors and staff.

All of these interviews were for attribution, or to use the language familiar to the participants themselves, 'on the record.' Participants knew that they would be identified and cited in the final published work. This was necessary for two reasons. Most crucially, to tell a story about each of the regional councillors and their own unique web of beliefs, I needed to be able to identify a specific comment as arising from a specific councillor. Comments attributable only to one unidentified individual who was a member of a group are of limited use for my purposes. Additionally, given the small group of councillors and even smaller group of experts involved in this case, it would not realistically be possible to obscure the identity of those providing insights in a way that would protect any promise of anonymity.

Taken together, this combination of archival research, document review, and interviews has allowed me to combine the strengths of these different methods. Archival materials, newspapers and government documents provide timely, often contemporary, accounts of past events told from a variety of viewpoints. The interviews complement and help to explain the data collected through paper documents, but also provide opportunities to explore the broader webs of beliefs of these individuals.

The Facts on Which We Agree

I realize that many readers may not share my anti-foundationalist[95] impulses, and may not find this interpretive account of what and how we know to be compelling. Not everyone will agree, as Bevir and Rhodes argue, that "objectivity" can be based on "evaluation by comparing rival stories using reasonable criteria."[96] It is not necessarily popular in any social science tradition to suggest that "A fact is a piece of evidence that nearly everyone in the given community would accept as true," and "narratives explain shared facts by postulating significant relationships, connections or similarities between them."[97]

Fortunately, if I believe that "Objectivity arises from using agreed facts to compare and criticize rival narratives," I must also believe that "the narrative must meet the tests set by its critics."[98] So while I take a determined stand for anti-foundationalism and for contextually rich research, it is not necessary to agree with this philosophical framework to find my assessment convincing. Despite few debates in the local politics sub-discipline about epistemology, there is also no shortage of individual case studies.[99] Local and urban scholars have been considering context for decades. Even with these seemingly unorthodox philosophical foundations, then, Parts I, II and III are not especially out of step with the work being done by innovative and dedicated scholars of local politics across Canada.

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[95] Anti-foundationalism, as Robert Lamb explains it, is "the rejection of the possibility of grounding knowledge in either pure reason or experience." Lamb, "Historicism," 77.

[96] Bevir and Rhodes, *Governance Stories*, 28.

[97] Ibid.

[98] Ibid.

[99] See Taylor and Eidelman, "Canadian Political Science and the City," 973.

Beyond the benefits already outlined, there are four additional benefits of the interpretive approach I have selected. First, I want this work to be meaningful to those outside the academy. I believe that my approach, like many narrative approaches more generally, opens up the possibility of making rigorous academic work that is accessible to a broader non-academic public. All scholarship is necessarily a process of telling stories for a particular audience. By acknowledging that this fact is at the heart of academic scholarship, we highlight the possibility of expanding that audience by retaining more of the features that make stories meaningful and compelling to non-academic audiences as we go about our work. This project, while first and foremost intended to satisfy the requirements of my PhD program, is designed for interested members of my local community as well as for my academic community. It is important academic research; it is also a fascinating story.

Second, I want this research to capture informal local insights on growth management. From watching growth management politics in Waterloo Region over the last few years, it is clear to me that any story I can tell about those politics would not be compelling to those involved if the agency of specific individuals were not seriously considered in that story. As I have moved about my community and answered polite questions about what I do, the first reactions of many who follow regional politics or growth management issues is to highlight the importance of particular political figures in this story. To ignore or marginalize these local insights would be to ignore crucial aspects of this story that make it relevant to local practitioners and community members. It would also make the answers I provide less compelling and less useful. Building upon broader systematic insights with the experiential insights of those on the ground should be a central goal of political science, and this kind of interpretive approach can help scholars to incorporate those insights, as well.

Third, I want this project to be fundamentally hopeful. I am a firm believer in the possibility of small, incremental, meaningful change. For my colleagues using diverse critical approaches to political science, I want to suggest that interpretive approaches can help to break us out of the sense of futility and determinism that so often characterizes our assessments of the world under contemporary neoliberal capitalism. Interpretive approaches can help us examine the visible and invisible constraints that actors face without dismissing their ability to make changes within and to the systems in which they work and which they enact.

Fourth, I want to show that municipalities can be meaningful sites of change. Such change may be far from direct, or even timely. It is almost always far from perfect. As Bevir and Rhodes make clear, we are at times not even aware that we are changing our beliefs, let alone changing our communities. Given the heavily constrained arena of municipal politics, it is easy to overlook municipalities as sites for meaningful change. Yet for many, municipalities are the most accessible and proximal level of government, and the level that most directly affects the small but meaningful features of their day-to-day lives. The fact that a change is subtle and slow does not mean it does not matter. It is no less an accomplishment because victories are not decisive or perfect. Sometimes the big changes are those that overtake us over decades or lifetimes.

Such is the case with smart growth in Waterloo Region. The remaining sections of this dissertation explain how it happened, and why the 2010 to 2014 regional council chose to defend it.

Chapter Breakdown

As described above, what follows is written in three parts. Part I is about tradition. As a whole, it describes the tradition of regional government and growth management in the Waterloo area.

Within it, Chapter 3 describes the ongoing conflicts over growth management that preceded the creation of the Region of Waterloo in 1973. I show that resolution of growth management conflicts, with provincial involvement, was a crucial impetus for the creation of a two-tier regional government structure in the Waterloo area.

Chapter 4 describes the period from the creation of the Region of Waterloo in 1973 to the turn of the century. I show that regional relationships after amalgamation were negotiated through planning, particularly through the creation of the 1976 Regional Official Policies Plan. In the 1990s, conflicts over provincially-led municipal restructuring would bring specific changes to planning, but most importantly would strengthen regional government while maintaining strong area municipal governments. The Region would enter the 21st century prepared for smart growth.

Chapter 5 describes the progress toward smart growth that the Region made in the first decade of the 21st century, focusing on the Regional Growth Management Strategy, light rail transit, and the Regional Official Plan. I show how the newly strengthened regional government system facilitated a commitment to smart growth policies and, in turn, how this commitment meant the Region was able to provide provincial leadership on smart growth in this period.

Part II is about dilemmas. As a whole, it describes the 2010 to 2014 regional council's decisions to defend its smart growth policies against two major challenges.

Within it, Chapter 6 examines regional council's 2011 decision to proceed with its light rail transit project despite facing three dilemmas: the money dilemma, the public opinion dilemma, and the regional dilemma. I show how council was able to integrate these three dilemmas into its existing set of beliefs.

Chapter 7 examines the same council's decision to defend its Regional Official Plan against both an appeal by developers to the Ontario Municipal Board (OMB) and a ruling from the OMB that undermined both local and provincial smart growth plans. I show that, unlike in the LRT case, council did not face significant dilemmas in its decision to appeal the ruling.

Part III is about webs of beliefs. Instead of using chapters, Part III is comprised of a series of 16 vignettes, which each tell a story about one of the 16 politicians on the 2010 to 2014 regional council, through the perspective of my interview with them. I show how each councillor's actions are rooted in their beliefs, and situate their beliefs and the actions that result from them in the context of their own web of beliefs.

Part III is followed by a conclusion, which addresses why all three parts are useful on their own and when considered together, and examines what we have learned about various aspects of the Waterloo case from this study. Finally, it addresses what this analysis might suggest for the future of smart growth in Waterloo Region and for interpretive and narrative approaches to the study of politics.

Part I: Tradition

Part I is about tradition. Using Bevir and Rhodes's framework for an interpretive approach, a tradition serves as a starting point for the beliefs that situated actors hold, change, and act upon. In their approach, traditions do not have pre-existing edges. The researcher must make a choice about how to "slice" that "undifferentiated social context," given what it is s/he wants to explain.[1]

I want to explain Waterloo Region's commitment to smart growth, and in particular to explain the 2010 to 2014 regional council's commitment to it. To do so, I must explain the tradition that has tied planning policies to the area's local government structures over the last half century. Planning policies in the Waterloo area have changed as local government structures have changed, and they have done so in ways that have been heavily reliant on the actions of the provincial government.

So the tradition upon which I focus in Part I is a largely institutionalist one, suggesting that, in this part of the story, institutions are the most important factor "used to explain political decisions."[2] Despite my philosophically heavy methodology, Part I will be largely recognizable to political scientists and others as an account that is well in line with more methodologically mainstream institutionalist accounts.

Part I shows that growth management and regional government have conditioned each other; they are, as Bevir and Rhodes would say, conditionally connected. As they explain, "Conditional connections exist when the nature of one object draws on the nature of another.

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[1] Bevir and Rhodes, *Governance Stories*, 21.

[2] Peters, *Institutional Theory in Political Science*, 164.

They condition each other, so they do not have an arbitrary relationship. Equally, the one does not follow from the other, so they do not have a necessary relationship."[3] As a whole, Part I shows how these conditional connections have developed, and outlines the contours of a tradition of growth management and regional government in the Waterloo area.

Chapter 3 shows that a regional government system was implemented in the Waterloo area in the late 1960s and early 1970s largely as the result of planning concerns. Chapter 4 shows that planning policies served as a major issue through which the relationships between the upper-tier regional municipality and the local-tier area municipalities in Waterloo Region were negotiated in the rest of the 20th century. Chapter 5 shows that a calming of debates over regional reform and changes that have strengthened regional government allowed for the adoption of smart growth policies in the new century, and for the Region of Waterloo to provide leadership on provincial smart growth initiatives.

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[3] Bevir and Rhodes, *The State as Cultural Practice*, 78.

Chapter 3: Conflict and Collaboration Before Regional Government

Introduction

In this chapter, I show that regional government was implemented in the Waterloo area largely due to planning concerns. I describe the problems facing the Waterloo area in the 1960s, which were primarily seen as a result of fragmentation, as well as the opportunities for conflict and collaboration that these problems created. I then explain how the challenges the Waterloo area was facing fit into the provincial government's agenda for regional development, regional planning, and regional government. Finally, I show that the provincial government's decision to choose regional government over the recommendation of the Waterloo Area Local Government Review was really a choice for regional planning.

The Problem

In the mid- to late-1960s, fragmentation of both local government and planning in the Waterloo area was seen to be a major problem by local and provincial governments. Massive postwar growth was a major challenge in many urbanizing parts of the province. After World War II, demographic pressures, economic expansion, and the spread of the private automobile would "reshape" Canada's urban areas into a "suburban metropolis."[1]

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[1] Hodge and Gordon, *Planning Canadian Communities*, 109.

This challenge was particularly acute in the Waterloo area. The area's population grew from 98,740 people in 1941 to 176,754 in 1961.[2] Between 1951 and 1961 alone, the population of the area grew by 40%, outpacing both the Midwestern Ontario Region (27%) and Ontario as a whole (36%).[3] Massive growth in urban areas (62%) hid significant decreases in both farm and non-farm rural populations.[4] People were moving to cities, and cities were swelling to fit them.

These challenges were exacerbated by local government structures, which were based on the historically prevalent separated county system.[5] Administratively, the area contained sixteen municipal organizations in total: three cities, separate themselves, along with 12 other municipalities that were also part of the rural Waterloo County municipality.[6] Population numbers ranged from the City of Kitchener's more than 91,000 residents to the Village of Wellesley's 661 residents.[7] In addition to the local governments, and as was common in Ontario

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[2] Stewart Fyfe and Ron. M. Farrow, "Data Book of Basic Information" (Waterloo, ON: Waterloo Area Local Government Review, July 1967), 12.

[3] Ibid.

[4] Ibid.

[5] See Spicer, *The Boundary Bargain*.

[6] These municipalities were, for clarity, the three cities (Galt, Kitchener, and Waterloo), four towns (Elmira, Hespeler, New Hamburg, and Preston), three villages (Ayr, Bridgeport, and Wellesley), the five townships (North Dumfries, Waterloo, Wellesley, Wilmot, and Woolwich), and Waterloo County. Fyfe and Farrow, "Data Book of Basic Information," 3.

[7] Ibid., 5.

at the time,[8] the area was served by a number of special purpose bodies providing services on a variety of scales.[9] They included the "Public Utilities Commissions, Water Commissions, Hydro Commissions, Police Commissions, Boards of Health, Parks Boards, Recreation Boards, Library Boards, and Planning Bodies."[10] Members of some of these bodies were elected directly, while others were appointed by councils.[11]

The massive scale of change was causing challenges for urban and rural areas alike, though the specific problems generally differed.[12] Urban areas, which had experienced most of the post-war growth,[13] were facing challenges associated with their rapid expansion. Transit systems were run by special purpose bodies that were not under municipal control, and combined with issues with funding, there were concerns about underserviced areas.[14] Significant expansion of urban populations, combined with the area's reliance on groundwater, meant that "the urban water supply" was seen as "one of the future's most pressing problems," particularly in the northern urbanized areas.[15] Rural municipalities, in contrast, were largely facing issues related to

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[8] Stewart Fyfe, "Local Government Reform in Ontario," in *A Look to the North: Canadian Regional Experience*, vol. V, Substate Regionalism and the Federal System (Washington, D.C.: Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations, 1974), 19.

[9] For more on the history of special purpose bodies in the Kitchener area, see Lucas, *Fields of Authority*.

[10] Fyfe and Farrow, "Data Book of Basic Information," 23.

[11] Ibid.

[12] None of the municipalities, for instance, were able to institute a recycling program due to inadequate scale. W. H. Palmer, "Report of the Waterloo Region Review Commission" (Toronto: Waterloo Region Review Commission, March 1979), 33.

[13] Fyfe and Farrow, "Data Book of Basic Information," 12.

[14] Palmer, "Report of the Waterloo Region Review Commission," 31.

[15] Fyfe and Farrow, "Report of Findings and Recommendations," 41.

scale and increasing expectations of urban-style municipal services.[16] For example, there were four local police forces with six or fewer officers, and half of them only had one or two officers.[17] Services like welfare were paid by the 15 municipalities (excluding the County), in some cases by staff who lacked training and were poorly paid.[18]

While it is tempting to look at these service challenges and see the distinctive needs and perspectives of urban and rural ways of life, it was the pressure put on the relationship between the two that was the most defining feature of the dysfunction in this period. There were concerns about incentives for rural free-riding, such that some programs funded by the cities, like recreation, were being used by nearby rural residents.[19] There was also a perceived incentive for rural municipalities to encourage poor residents to move to the cities so that others would pay welfare costs.[20] Urban residents were paying both for their own municipal police forces and for most of the cost of Ontario Provincial Police services provided to rural areas.[21] At the same time, residents moving to rural areas not only often brought expectations of urban-style services, but also contributed to rising agricultural land prices and more urban-like activity in the rural municipalities. This pressure was driving Mennonite[22] and other farmers to increasingly outlying areas.[23]

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[16] Ibid., 23.

[17] Fyfe and Farrow, "Data Book of Basic Information," 50.

[18] Palmer, "Report of the Waterloo Region Review Commission," 33–34.

[19] Ibid., 35.

[20] Ibid., 34.

[21] Ibid., 29.

[22] The Waterloo area, and particularly the more northern areas of what was formerly categorized as Block No. 2 of the Haldimand Tract, was settled by large numbers of German Mennonites from Pennsylvania. Elizabeth

Broadly, the problems faced by local municipalities under these conditions were largely seen to be the result of fragmented planning. By this time, ideas about planning were beginning to shift. While postwar planning in Ontario had focused almost exclusively on development control, more "multi-disciplinary approaches, innovative techniques" and "a wide range of policy concerns" were becoming the focus of planning professionals.[24] Indeed, in 1973, a review of municipal planning by the Ontario Economic Council would assume that

> the municipal planning process is taken to comprise two main activities: first, the ordering of the use of land, and the timing of its preservation, development or redevelopment; and second, the provision of planning advice on financial, social and public service programs and work projects of various kinds.[25]

Thus, while land use was still a primary issue in planning, there was an increasing expectation that land use planning would connect to the planning processes for other kinds of needs and activities.

Bloomfield, Linda Foster, and Larry Wyman Laliberté, *The Waterloo Township Cadastre in 1861: "A System of the Most Regular Irregularity,"* Occasional Papers in Geography (University of Guelph. Dept. of Geography) 21 (Guelph, Ont.: Dept. of Geography, University of Guelph, 1994). Its German and Mennonite features are one of the area's unique features that have influenced its development. Trudi E. Bunting, "Main Street: The Geography of Waterloo Region and the Evolution of the Dispersed City," in *The Dynamics of the Dispersed City: Geographic and Planning Perspectives on Waterloo Region*, ed. Trudi E. Bunting, Kevin Curtis, and Pierre Filion, Department of Geography Publication Series ; No. 47 (Waterloo, Ont: Dept. of Geography, University of Waterloo, 1996). There are still strong Old Order Mennonite communities in the townships that continue to rely on horses and buggies for transportation. Region of Waterloo, "Regional Official Plan," June 18, 2015, 73, http://www.regionofwaterloo.ca/en/regionalGovernment/PreviousROP.asp.

[23] Fyfe and Farrow, "Report of Findings and Recommendations," 23.

[24] Ontario Economic Council et al., *Subject to Approval: A Review of Municipal Planning in Ontario* (Toronto, ON: Ontario Economic Council, 1973), 39–41.

[25] Ibid., xi.

As the scope of activities that planning encompassed was growing by the 1950s, the theoretical model at the centre of planning shifted, as well. The "rational-comprehensive method" was focused on efficiency and a scientific approach that would consider "all the possible alternative courses of action in making a plan," and "select the alternative that would most likely achieve the community's most valued objectives."[26] By the 1960s, good planning would most often be seen as both rational and comprehensive.

Comprehensive planning was certainly not possible under the fragmented system of local government outlined above, nor could the results of such a system be seen as rational. In the postwar period in Ontario, planning was "carried out not in municipalities, but in 'planning areas,' and plans" were "made not by councils but by planning boards."[27] Municipal council members were, until the early 1970s, prevented by law from holding a majority on these boards, which reflected "the pervasive distrust of local government" in the influential American planning context of the time.[28] In this way, major planning decisions were intentionally separated from local municipal control. There were two types of planning areas: those that covered only one municipality or a part of a municipality, and those that were "joint" planning areas, covering "two or more municipalities or parts thereof."[29]

By 1970, planning was in some ways under the control of the 16 municipalities, and each municipality had a planning board that generally operated on the same geographic lines as the

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[26] Hodge and Gordon, *Planning Canadian Communities*, 142.

[27] Ontario Economic Council et al., *Subject to Approval: A Review of Municipal Planning in Ontario*, 5.

[28] Ibid.

[29] Ibid.

municipality, but which was not subordinate to it.[30] In addition to these 32 bodies, there were 13

committees of adjustment, the Ontario Municipal Board, and the Minister of Municipal Affairs

involved in planning in the Waterloo area.[31][32]

With so many bodies involved in planning, there was no one plan for the area that

covered the County and the separated cities. Many local decision-makers saw the absence of a

comprehensive plan to guide orderly development as a major threat. Two main planning

problems were particularly acute by the late 1960s: annexation and planning for assessment.

Haphazard annexation, when one municipality's territory is transferred to another municipality,

had to date been used as the primary method of urban expansion. By 1960, this arrangement was

coming to be seen as unsustainable.[33] By 1970, the boundaries of the area's municipalities had

been changed more than 50 times, and more than 30,000 acres of land had been annexed.[34]

Waterloo Township alone, facing the most pressure from neighbouring urban municipalities, had

ceded 24,000 acres.[35] Another problem was "planning for assessment," as rural municipalities

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[30] Fyfe and Farrow, "Report of Findings and Recommendations," 130.

[31] Ibid.

[32] This fragmentation was a problem for landowners and developers, as well, and "delays in construction and development" were seen by the Urban Land Institute to be, in Stewart Fyfe's words, "related very closely to the structural problem – that is, the divided system of controls." Ibid., 141. Simplification of the planning system was an important goal for those with business interests in urban development. There was also significant frustration from local officials about the extent to which the provincial government was slowing down planning approvals, with some taking years, and incurring "considerable cost and resentment." Ibid., 144.

[33] Elizabeth Bloomfield, *Waterloo Township through Two Centuries* (Kitchener, Ont: Waterloo Historical Society, 1995), 391.

[34] Fyfe and Farrow, "Report of Findings and Recommendations," 17.

[35] Ibid.

had an incentive to encourage new housing, shopping, and industrial developments on the outskirts of neighbouring urban municipalities in order to fill gaps in municipal finances by increasing their property tax base.[36][37]
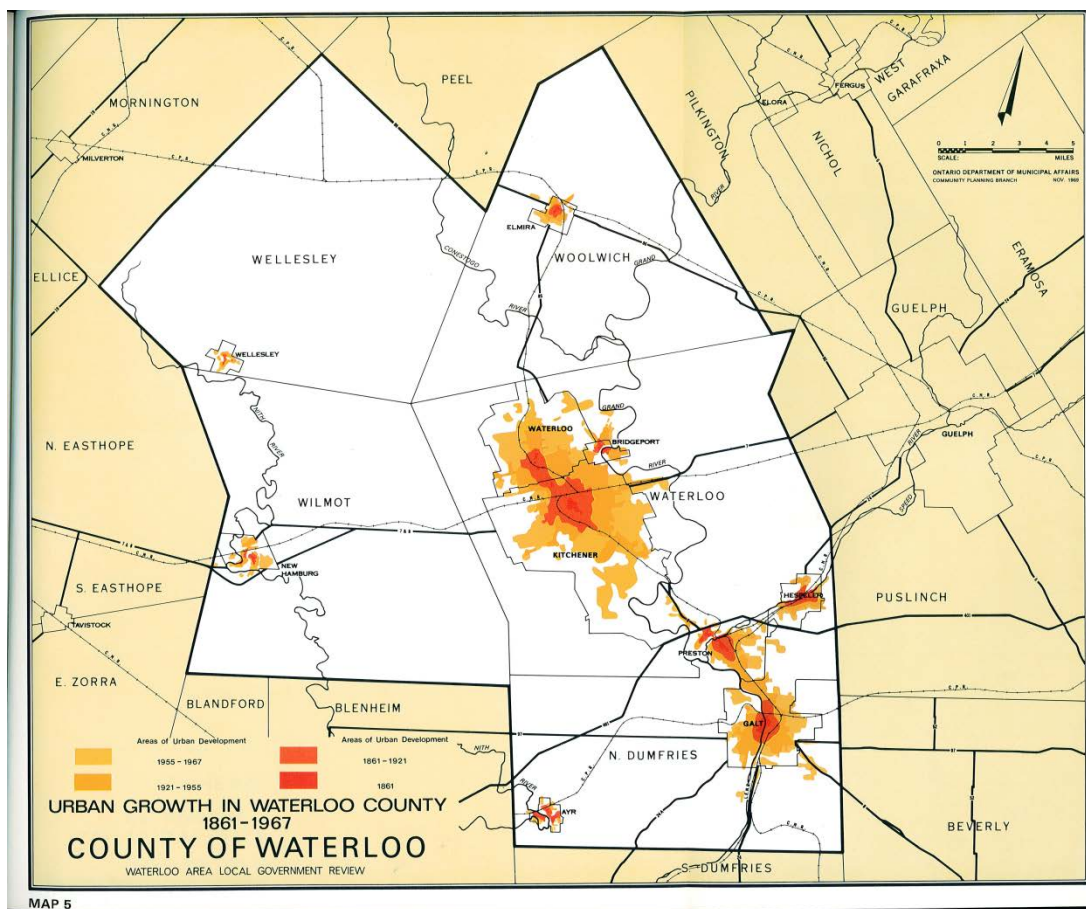
Figure 1: Map 5: Urban Growth in Waterloo County, 1861-1967. Fyfe, Stewart and Ron. M. Farrow. "Report of Findings and Recommendations." Toronto: Waterloo Area Local Government Review, 1970. Source: Region of Waterloo Archives. Copyright: Queen's Printer for Ontario, 1970.

The challenges described here were the result of fragmentation, but they were the result of much more than fragmentation. They were indicative of a set of institutional arrangements

[36] Dalton Bales, "The Regional Municipality of Waterloo," (Address, March 16, 1971), 4.

[37] While the focus of much of the documentation in this period is on the incentives for fragmented municipalities to encourage poorly planned growth, specific annexations were advanced by particular builders and business interests who had particular projects for specific plots of land. For a rare treatment of this in the 1960s in Waterloo Township, see Bloomfield, *Waterloo Township through Two Centuries*, 380–81.

that was premised on the separation of urban and rural life. In this institutional relationship between urban and rural, and in the context of postwar growth, problems related to land use planning were at the core.

Conflict and Collaboration

These challenges brought opportunities for both conflict and collaboration between the area's 16 municipalities. The annexation process itself generally created "a 'winner' and a 'loser,'" and "leads to very ragged-looking municipal maps and municipalities needing therapy as a consequence of bad cases of 'planning nerves.'"[38]

While there was general agreement that there were problems, there was less agreement on the appropriate solution. In the absence of a coordinated plan, one city sketched out its own vision for the Waterloo area. In 1964, the planning department for the City of Kitchener, the most populous municipality in the area, had proposed a plan called Kitchener 2000. In the long term, Kitchener wanted one political jurisdiction for the geographic county, and for all the major urban areas to eventually be amalgamated into one central city, while the more rural parts of the area would be populated by denser suburban towns.[39] As an interim step, they proposed an amalgamation between the urban Kitchener municipality and what remained of the rural Waterloo Township. This would allow Kitchener to gain control of lands it needed for industrial uses, of which it had short supply,[40] and for a more orderly expansion of the urban area into the rural, with more comprehensive planning.

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[38] Fyfe and Farrow, "Report of Findings and Recommendations," 139.

[39] Kitchener Planning Department, *Kitchener 2000 and a Plan of Action* (Kitchener, Ont: Kitchener Planning Dept., 1964).

[40] Ibid., 7.

It would be an understatement to say that their vision was not shared by neighbouring municipalities. There were concerns that such a loss to the rural County would gut its already limited resources,[41] and both the City of Waterloo and, unsurprisingly, Waterloo Township preferred a less industrial vision for land use in Waterloo Township, and one that was based on meaningful two-tier government.[42]

Despite these conflicts and ongoing struggles, both planning and cooperative planning had been happening in the area for many decades. "The Waterloo Area" had "a distinguished record for pioneering in town planning," and efforts to create town plans for Kitchener (formerly called Berlin) and the City of Waterloo went back to at least 1912.[43] Major interjurisdictional efforts went back at least to the late 1940s, when two major joint planning boards were established in the Waterloo area: the Kitchener-Waterloo and Suburban Area Planning Board, and the Galt and Suburban Planning Board.[44]

Given long local histories of efforts at planning and collaboration, it is perhaps not surprising that the provincial government was willing to try out a new approach in Waterloo.[45] The Waterloo County Area Planning Co-ordinating Committee had been a local initiative in 1962 and 1963, which had opened communication between neighbouring municipalities that had not previously met to discuss these challenges.[46] Given the insolubility of the problems the committee was discussing, they would ask the provincial minister of municipal affairs to assist.[47]

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[41] Bloomfield, *Waterloo Township through Two Centuries*, 394.

[42] Fyfe and Farrow, "Report of Findings and Recommendations," 139.

[43] Ibid., 127.

[44] Ibid.

[45] Ontario Economic Council et al., *Subject to Approval: A Review of Municipal Planning in Ontario*, 7.

[46] Bloomfield, *Waterloo Township through Two Centuries*, 392–93.

The same year that Kitchener proposed Kitchener 2000, the provincial government

responded to the local request and proposed the Waterloo County Area Planning Board.[48] The

new Board was created in 1965, in an attempt to bypass the structural blocks preventing

coordinated local planning in the Waterloo Area.[49] Elizabeth Bloomfield says support for the

Board among other municipalities was reinforced by the Kitchener 2000 report, which she notes

had "stressed Kitchener as the focus of Waterloo County with a kind of manifest destiny to

continue its expansion without waiting for the county to agree on co-operative action."[50] The

Board spent two years preparing to create an official plan for the area, and then took the main

coordinating role in a further effort at area-wide planning collaboration, called the Waterloo-

South Wellington Area Study. [51][52]

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[47] Ibid., 393.

[48] Ibid.; Department of Municipal Affairs Community Planning Branch, "Waterloo Area," 1964, COW-43-1/1/1, Region of Waterloo Archives.

[49] W. H. Palmer, J. G. Church, and W. E. Winegard, "A Collection of Perspectives on Municipal Planning," 1978, 12.

[50] Bloomfield, *Waterloo Township through Two Centuries*, 393.

[51] Ibid., 394.

[52] The Waterloo-South Wellington Area Study, which began in the spring of 1967, involved a wide variety of government bodies from provincial and local levels. The study area included Guelph and parts of Wellington County to the east, and would produce several diverse conceptual plans for how to handle growth in the area. Waterloo-South Wellington Area Study, "Alternatives for Growth," August 1970, COW 43-2/2/8, Region of Waterloo Archives; Waterloo County Area Planning Board, *A Strategy for Growth: Waterloo-South Wellington Area Study* (Kitchener, Ont: Area Planning and Development Co-Ordinating Committee, Waterloo-South Wellington Area Study, 1972).

The Waterloo County Area Planning Board was as seen as "effective … in co-ordinating activities, collecting information and acting as a focus for area-wide activities."[53] Hopes for the board were initially high. In the year it was created, the Director of the Community Planning Branch of the provincial Department of Municipal Affairs suggested that "the Waterloo County Planning Area" was "an example of a new approach to the problems which might result in the definition of fewer planning areas but much more effective planning in those that were established."[54]

Yet problems persisted. This planning board was one of sixteen in the area,[55] and was expected to be primary despite technically having "the same terms of reference" and powers as the other fifteen.[56] In context, this meant that "Certainly the Cities continue to plan vigorously for their areas with no direction from the Area Board, and Kitchener certainly has a larger budget and staff than the Area Board."[57] Additionally, the County served as the "'designated municipality' which must formally adopt the official plan upon which all planning hinges," but was the weakest body for implementation purposes, since it had almost no power over zoning or subdivisions.[58] It was becoming clear that implementing the resulting official plan would be "impossible…if municipal powers remained unchanged."[59]

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[53] Fyfe and Farrow, "Report of Findings and Recommendations," 131.

[54] Ontario Economic Council et al., *Subject to Approval: A Review of Municipal Planning in Ontario*, 7.

[55] Fyfe and Farrow, "Report of Findings and Recommendations," 130.

[56] Ibid., 133.

[57] Ibid.

[58] Ibid.

[59] Bloomfield, *Waterloo Township through Two Centuries*, 394.

Just as the practical planning challenges were not resolved by these coordinated planning efforts, the conflicts they engendered between municipalities were not resolved, either. The cities felt that they needed more land for development, and Kitchener was still pursuing Kitchener 2000 to meet its needs for "industrial, commercial and housing growth."[60] The Waterloo County Area Planning Board had given its support for Kitchener's plans for the east side of the Grand River in Waterloo Township in the summer of 1966, and these plans along with the "flurry of annexation proposals" at that time[61] did not assuage concerns of aggressive urban expansion under the emerging planning arrangement.[62] Conflict between different communities in the Waterloo area over planning continued.

The Province

The Ontario government is necessarily a constant presence in the history of planning and local government, both in the Waterloo area and across the province. Municipalities are created, changed, and eliminated by the province. Planning is heavily controlled by provincial legislation, regulation and approval, and disputes are settled under provincial tribunals and courts. Local activities over municipal government structures and planning in the Waterloo area have consistently happened under the very large shadow of the provincial government. This was certainly the case in the late 1960s.

At the time, the province was decidedly focused on its agenda for regional development and regional planning, as well as regional government. As debates over what should be done in

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[60] Ibid.

[61] Waterloo County Area Planning Board, "The Waterloo County Area Planning Board - Its Role, Functions and Responsibilities," January 1967, 79, 43-1/1/2, Region of Waterloo Archives.

[62] See Bloomfield, *Waterloo Township through Two Centuries*, 394.

Waterloo developed locally, often with provincial involvement, the Ontario government was developing its own vision for addressing municipal government and planning fragmentation across the province, and particularly in the areas most affected by the post-war building and population boom. Through a series of plans under the banner of Design for Development in the mid to late 1960s,[63] the province signaled its demand for significant changes that would fuse regional development, regional planning, and regional government. Local government reviews were underway across the province, in concert with the government's stated aim of implementing one- or two-tier regional governments across Ontario that would have jurisdiction over urban and rural communities, and create integrated plans for both of them together.[64]

These three concepts of regional development, regional planning, and regional government are potentially distinct, but they were largely fused by the government's approach to the problems of the day. As Richard White explains,

> regional development and regional planning are not the same thing. Regional development refers to government programs, usually in the form of subsidies or financial incentives, that assist economically disadvantaged or declining regions. Regional planning — which is generally done in growing regions — refers to government controls or regulations that shape a region's growth into the most efficient and socially beneficial arrangement. Although regional development and regional planning share certain goals, and both require government intervention in economic activity, they can exist without each other. Regional development programs can be implemented without being part of a regional plan, while regional plans need not include government subsidies or growth promotion programs.[65]

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[63] Office of the Premier, *Design for Development: Statement of the Prime Minister of the Province of Ontario on Regional Development Policy* (Toronto: The Office of the Premier, 1966); Darcy McKeough, "Statement by the Honourable W. Darcy McKeough" (Legislature of Ontario, Toronto, ON, December 2, 1968).

[64] McKeough, "Statement by the Honourable W. Darcy McKeough," 4.

[65] Richard White, *The Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe in Historical Perspective*, Neptis Papers on Growth in the Metropolitan Toronto Region, Paper 4 (Toronto, Ontario: Neptis Foundation, 2007), 24, http://www.library.yorku.ca/e/resolver/id/2535242.

Yet for Premier John Robarts and his government, regional development and regional planning

would be linked. In April of 1966, the Government of Ontario introduced its initial regional

development plan.[66] One of the plan's founding principles was that "the government accepts the

responsibility of guiding, encouraging and assisting the orderly and rational development of the

province."[67] The scale of regions examined in Phase 1 of Design for Development was fairly

large, with groupings of such as Northwestern Ontario, Central Ontario, and Mid-Western

Ontario.[68] That year, the Robarts government would create its own Regional Development

Branch in the Department of Treasury and Economics.[69] Over the next few years, the original

Design for Development would tie regional development and regional planning together.

The first Design for Development in 1966 showed two major features of the province's

perspective on planning in this period. First, consistent with the Ontario Economic Council's

description,[70] planning itself was seen to be about both land use and a broader range of

associated services and economic planning to make it all work together. As Robarts announced

in 1966, "good regional planning … must include water supply, sewage disposal, transportation

facilities, highways, agriculture, mining, the location of industry, the supply of labour, and all the

other factors necessary to the provision of the best possible social and economic climate for the

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[66] John Robarts, "Statement by the Honourable John Robarts, Prime Minister of Ontario" (Legislature of Ontario, Toronto, ON, November 28, 1968).

[67] Ibid., 3.

[68] Ibid., 5.

[69] White, *The Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe in Historical Perspective*, 25.

[70] Ontario Economic Council et al., *Subject to Approval: A Review of Municipal Planning in Ontario*, xi.

people who live and work within the region."[71] Planning at this time was about both land use and

much broader considerations.

Second, and most crucially, it showed the government's determination to link regional

development and regional planning, and particularly to comprehensive planning. As Robarts

said,

> Regional development policies are instrumental aspects of a broader provincial growth
> policy. On this basis, appropriate regional development requires comprehensive planning.
> It is also this government's role to ensure that regional land use planning is undertaken so
> that the regions of the province are developed according to an orderly plan which would
> include environmental and economic considerations. Such an approach looks not only to
> general land use, but also to the social and economic potential of a region and its centres,
> and concentrates on developing these centres in the interest of the region as a whole."[72]

Thus the province's conception of regional planning included a broad range of services and the

primacy of economic and social development considerations.

What the first stage of Design for Development did not do, however, was directly link

regional development and regional planning to regional government. While the initial plan

seriously acknowledged the importance of municipal governments in the regional planning

efforts that the province was undertaking,[73] Robarts insisted in 1966 that the government was not

pursuing regional government directly as part of its plan. "Finally," he said,

> it must be emphasized that this statement is concerned with regional development
> and not regional government. Any regional development structures created by the
> government will be such that they will not disturb the existing power and authority of
> the municipal and county councils within the regions. Great caution has been
> exercised to avoid the imposition of new forms of government. Moreover, studies are
> now being conducted in certain areas of the province which could lead to
> recommendations for adjustment in local area government. The implementation of
> our regional development policy will in no way interfere with such considerations of

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[71] Office of the Premier, *Design for Development*, 3.

[72] Ibid., 5.

[73] see ibid., 6.

area government, but rather, could well lay the groundwork for changes which might eventually be appropriate.[74]

Two and a half years later, this coy attitude about regional government had been all but abandoned by the premier and his government.[75] In November of 1968, Robarts made a statement in the Legislature of Ontario on the second phase Design for Development.[76] "Regional government and a regional development program are closely associated," Robarts stated.[77]

He believed that local government fragmentation was the problem. He was not alone. "As I have indicated," he said, "there is also a wide public acceptance of the need for governmental responsibility on a regional basis. Almost every conference in recent months related to our current urban challenges has suggested that a major barrier to municipal solutions is the fragmentation of our municipal structure."[78]

Robarts was right. A major shift in views about the relationship between urban and rural communities was occurring, and not just in Ontario. As Zachary Spicer notes, "Most Canadian policymakers responded to the rise of suburbia by building governance structures that viewed urban and rural as connected."[79] Of this period, Spicer explains, "This response to local growth

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[74] Ibid., 7.

[75] Between these two speeches on Design for Development, in 1967, a crucial Ontario Committee on Taxation report had been delivered that strongly insisted on "a comprehensive system of regional government." Ontario Committee on Taxation, "Ontario Committee on Taxation Report, 1967," 1967, http://govdocs.ourontario.ca/node/7915.

[76] Robarts, "Statement by the Honourable John Robarts, Prime Minister of Ontario."

[77] Ibid., 6.

[78] Ibid., 7.

[79] Spicer, *The Boundary Bargain*, 6.

and development was new. The traditional response in Canada to growth was to create distinctions between urban and rural."[80] As Spicer suggests, this idea of planning for urban and rural together was fairly novel. Andrew Sancton argues that one of the main arguments upon which "Policy-makers in western democracies based their dramatic assault on traditional structures of municipal government" in this period was that urban and rural needed to be joined:

> they argued that, especially in fast-growing areas, a regional political authority was needed to plan future development around existing population centres. The main implication of this belief was that, contrary to previous practice, city and countryside would now have to be joined, for planning functions at least.[81]

The drive toward regional planning and regional government was swift in the 1960s. Political scientist Harold Kaplan even delivered a series of five lectures on CBC radio on the topic.[82] Views about the proper relationship between urban and rural were rapidly changing, and the premier and his government were committed to this new response to postwar growth challenges.

If there was any remaining doubt after the premier's statement that the government's concern with regional development and regional planning extended to regional government, it would likely have been quite thoroughly extinguished just days later, when Darcy McKeough took the floor.[83] McKeough was then Robarts's Minister of Municipal Affairs, and he did not mince words on Design for Development Two:

> Let me briefly restate the main point of the Prime Minister's statement so there will be no misunderstanding here, or outside this House. The Government of Ontario has accepted the objective of regionalization of Municipal Government in Ontario, and will move toward the implementation of this objective as quickly as possible.[84]

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[80] Ibid., 7.

[81] Sancton, "Local Government Reorganization in Canada since 1975," 3.

[82] Kaplan, *The Regional City*.

[83] McKeough, "Statement by the Honourable W. Darcy McKeough."

[84] Ibid., 1.

The necessity of regional governments, from the perspective of the Robarts government, was tied closely to the goal of planning for urban and rural areas together:

> The Government proposes that Regional Government must be viewed in terms of the urban-centred region. By this I mean that the region will cover the major urban centres and the surrounding areas which together share social, economic, and physical services.
> We accept this definition of the Region. The old distinction between urban and rural interests is breaking down – rural and urban attitudes are moving closer together all the time. In earlier times when transportation was primitive and economic activity was on a small scale, we could think of Ontario as a series of small self-contained communities divided into two identifiable societies – city and country. Each of these societies had its own values and aims.
> Now, however, we are one society where some live in big communities and others live in towns, villages or rural areas.[85]

McKeough argued that Ontarians shared common desires for quality of life, and that, increasingly, shared services in urban and rural areas was creating an "emerging community of interest," which meant that "the shape our Regional Governments will take covers the urban centre and its rural hinterland, both of which are, in fact, mutually interdependent."[86]

McKeough's speech considered the responsibilities that would have to be split in two-tiered regional systems, including "Taxation Billing and Collection," "Police and Fire Protection," "Water Supply and Distribution," and "Health and Welfare."[87] Unsurprisingly, one of them was planning:

> In the two-tier system there is a division of responsibility for various public services. There will also be a division of responsibility for the preparation and implementation of planning policy within the region. The Regional Municipality will be responsible for the broad, overall physical and economic framework for regional growth, and for

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[85] Ibid., 4.

[86] Ibid.

[87] Ibid., 6–7.

the planning of those facilities under their direct jurisdiction. Within this general
framework the local municipality will prepare more detailed plans.

Thus, the government's plans for regional development, regional planning, and regional
government were solidly linked by this point.

McKeough's speech should have left no question that a new municipal structure was
coming to the Waterloo area. McKeough was, in some ways, not overly specific about which
areas would be regionalized, stating primarily that regional governments would be established
"on a problem-area priority basis, concentrating our attention on these parts of Ontario where the
situation is most serious."[88] Despite this ambiguity, in the same speech he listed a number of
areas in which such changes would be happening, including Waterloo. He noted that the
government was awaiting the "final Waterloo Area Local Government Review," and "Within six
months" he hoped "to be able to offer a Regional Government proposal to the area."[89] By the end
of McKeough's speech, then, it would have been fairly clear that regional government was
coming to the Waterloo area.

This strong promise of regional government should not be necessarily interpreted as a
demand for a two-tiered government structure. What McKeough meant by regional government
is not what might be assumed based on what are called regional governments in Ontario today.
The new regional governments, he said, could either be one-tier or two-tier. One-tier
governments would cover the entire regional area with a single municipality, while two-tier
government would "divide municipal government between two levels of Local Government – a
Regional Municipality and a group of smaller local municipalities."[90] He explained that the

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[88] Ibid., 10.

[89] Ibid., 14.

[90] Ibid., 5.

choice of a one-tier or a two-tier regional government would depend on individual consideration of specific factors in each area, including the region's size, "Population distribution," "fiscal resources," and "physical and social geography."[91]

Yet the intention was clear: the province expected that regional government was coming to the Waterloo area, whether in the form of a one-tier or two-tier region. The particulars were, as McKeough spoke, being examined by the Waterloo Area Local Government Review. The commissioner and his team had the challenge of providing recommendations for local government in the Waterloo area, under the strong expectation of the provincial government, which would decide on any changes, for a regional system.

Choosing Regional Government

It was therefore under a developing and substantial shadow that the process to recommend local government changes in the Waterloo area would be conducted. In 1966, the Province of Ontario had commissioned the Waterloo Area Local Government Review.[92] The review's work nestled fairly comfortably into the broad frenzy of activity around planning in the Waterloo Area, and planning was a central issue of the review. Certainly, Commissioner Stewart Fyfe, political scientist at Queen's University, assessed a broad range of services,[93] but gave particularly significant attention to issues of planning. The last chapter in his report's Part Two

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[91] Ibid.

[92] Fyfe and Farrow, "Report of Findings and Recommendations," 10.

[93] The chapters in Part Two of Fyfe's report included "Water and Sewage," "Conservation," "Parks and Recreation," "Police and Fire," "Licensing and Inspection," "Roads," "Public Transit," "Electrical Distribution," "Health Services," "Social Services," "Public Housing," "Education," "Libraries," "Finance," and "Garbage Disposal." Ibid., iii–v.

on services, entitled "Planning and Development," was the longest, and had by far the longest list

of subheadings.[94] Fyfe's summary of the situation spoke explicitly about the planning

fragmentation issue,[95] and he was concerned with rational planning. "The fundamental difficulty

of piecemeal annexation," he wrote, "is that it is extremely prejudicial to rational planning on

either side of the borders of potential growth areas."[96]

Yet the centrality of planning in the review process was evident in more than just its final

report. The review was instigated in large part due to concerns over a recent and substantial

annexation attempt,[97] as Kitchener's efforts to expand substantially east into Waterloo Township

for industrial purposes were met with considerable resistance.[98] Despite the review's emphasis

on planning and on more systematic government changes to address the problems and conflict

the area was facing, municipalities were hardly content to wait for the government question to be

decided. Disputes over whether annexations should be frozen during the review led to calls for

Fyfe's resignation and for Kitchener to withdraw from the review.[99] It was thus a contentious set

of planning issues into which the Fyfe review had necessarily inserted itself. Ron M. Farrow, the

review's resident research director and secretary, went so far as to say that "the review" was "in

a sense a great big annexation hearing."[100]

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[94] Ibid., v.

[95] Ibid., 138.

[96] Ibid., 139.

[97] Ken Seiling, interview by author, Kitchener, ON, January 25, 2016.

[98] Bloomfield, *Waterloo Township through Two Centuries*, 394–96.

[99] Ibid., 396.

[100] Quoted in ibid.

Given the provincial government's official statements on the issue,[101] it should have come as no surprise that the province decided to implement regional government in the Waterloo Area. Perhaps more surprising was Stewart Fyfe's decision to not recommend regional government. In his final report in February of 1970,[102] it is clear that Fyfe was fully aware of the province's previously stated strong preferences for regional government, mentioning McKeough's speech of December 2, 1968 specifically. "The content of the Minister's announcement has been taken into account," he wrote, "but as there had been no change in the terms of reference of this Review, nor any indication that the recommendations were to be in any way restricted, the Review has continued on the basis of the original terms of reference."[103]

Fyfe rejected the two most extreme options: total amalgamation into a single-tier region and doing nothing.[104] The option of no change did not address the urbanization problems, or the strain being felt by small municipalities. While total amalgamation might well have met the province's definition of a one-tier regional municipality, Fyfe felt strongly that the option was too costly and would not adequately serve the "diversity of the Area."[105]

Fyfe recommended what he named Scheme A, which he described as "A Reorganized City-County System."[106] It proposed the creation of two larger cities [107] that would remain

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[101] Bales, "The Regional Municipality of Waterloo."

[102] Fyfe and Farrow, "Report of Findings and Recommendations."

[103] Ibid., 5.

[104] Ibid., 178.

[105] Fyfe, "Local Government Reform in Ontario," 178.

[106] Fyfe and Farrow, "Report of Findings and Recommendations," 178.

[107] Ibid.

separate from the County municipalities, which would be reorganized from 12 into five.[108] The County would be tasked with rural planning responsibilities, leaving only two cities and the county charged with the task: a significant consolidation and reduction of the fragmentation that had been seen on the planning file.[109]

Fyfe's efforts to preserve smaller municipalities split along urban and rural lines were predictably unsuccessful, given the province's strong push for regional governments. Fyfe likely foresaw this when he also outlined details for a two-tiered regional government system, which he called Scheme B, that would create three urban cities, four rural townships, and the Town of Elmira, all included under one regional municipality.[110]

In the end, Fyfe and the provincial government disagreed about what should be done in the Waterloo area. To some extent, this was a disagreement about the severity of the problem as it was expressed in Waterloo. Fyfe had argued that the situation was not as dire as in other areas of Ontario,[111] and recommended more minor modifications to the system. He thought regional government was too "drastic … for the more limited problems of the Waterloo Area."[112] In contrast, the provincial government did not see Fyfe's Scheme A as an adequate departure from the dysfunctional status quo. "Scheme A," Minister Bales said, "is essentially a re-organized city-county system such as we have known in Ontario for well over one-hundred years."[113]

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[108] Ibid., 178–79.

[109] Ibid., 179–80.

[110] Ibid., 180.

[111] Ibid., 182.

[112] Ibid.

[113] Bales, "The Regional Municipality of Waterloo," 2.

Yet behind that difference of opinion on the problem's severity was a substantive disagreement about the appropriate relationship between urban and rural. More consistent with hundreds of years of tradition,[114] Fyfe focused on ensuring that meaningful communities of interest had adequate capacity to provide for their drastically different needs.[115] Despite the province's clear preference for a one- or two-tier regional arrangement,[116] Fyfe did not believe that "the strength of the interest in common between urban and rural areas and between the two urban complexes" was "strong enough" to "warrant one government for the whole area at this time."[117] One of his concerns was that "the rural voice would be relatively weak" under any regional council arrangement with the cities that respected representation by population.[118] He noted that

> Historically the combination of urban and rural in this county (or in Ontario generally) has not been a happy one…. The differences between urban and rural are still significant in this area. This is *not* a metropolitan area faced with major problems of overspill and weak rural government, as in the other local government reviews.[119]

Fyfe reported that there were concerns from some rural residents about being joined to the cities for government purposes. "The farming element," Fyfe wrote, "expressed quite strongly that it thought that the Cities would not understand the problems of the rural areas and that the rural voice would be lost in the big battalions of City voters, particularly because the rural voters are not only few in numbers, but also are remote geographically, and have a way of

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[114] Spicer, *The Boundary Bargain*, 8.

[115] Fyfe and Farrow, "Report of Findings and Recommendations," 182.

[116] See McKeough, "Statement by the Honourable W. Darcy McKeough," 4–5.

[117] Fyfe and Farrow, "Report of Findings and Recommendations," 181.

[118] Ibid.

[119] Ibid., 182.

life which differs in important respects."[120] He was concerned about urban domination of rural areas, and suggested that the two should remain separate. He believed the problems of restricting urban growth in rural areas and inadequate coordination could be solved by changes in the behaviour of the provincial government.[121] In short, Fyfe's Scheme A was an expression of his rejection of the province's vision for regional governments, at least for the Waterloo area.

In contrast, Minister Bales made it clear that the province wanted local government to solve planning problems comprehensively, and that this must involve bodies that could be responsible for solving urban and rural problems together. In his speech announcing the province's decision for the Waterloo area, the minister declared:

> It is quite clear to all of us by now that the present local government system is breaking down in this area as in other parts of Ontario because it cannot deal effectively with the insistent pressures for urban development. There is no one political institution which has the final responsibility for designing and carrying out a broad sound development policy.[122]

The province saw an important relationship between urban and rural parts of the area, based primarily on the number of township residents working in the cities.[123] "I am convinced," he said, "that this clear relationship between the urban areas and the surrounding rural areas must be emphasized rather than ignored."[124]

Bales was particularly critical of Fyfe's preferred arrangement because he did not believe it would adequately address planning for assessment. The province thought County government

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[120] Ibid., 25.

[121] Ibid., 182.

[122] Bales, "The Regional Municipality of Waterloo," 4.

[123] Ibid.

[124] Ibid.

under Scheme A would have limited "potential for industrial and commercial assessment," putting strain on residential property taxes, and giving the County reason to support development on the urban periphery to raise additional taxes.[125] The government was concerned that such development would continue current problems, and threaten both farming and rational land use planning in the area, and that three separate planning bodies would be ill-suited to addressing these challenges.[126]

In the end, then, both Fyfe and the Ministry saw the appropriate institutional relationship between urban and rural parts of the Waterloo area as perhaps the central question of the review. For Fyfe, "The final recommendation for two cities plus a modified county is based on a conviction that at the local level the capacity to appraise needs and make decisions will be best advanced by a simple organization and units that are as homogeneous as possible."[127] For Minister Bales, "Urban and rural representatives must recognize their mutual interests and work together on one council towards one solution to problems of growth which affect everybody."[128] The province was committed to the promise of regional government; Stewart Fyfe was not.

Existing local governments in the Waterloo area were, by the numbers, more in agreement with Bales than with Fyfe. Despite its drive for regional government, the province was at least somewhat concerned about the local political palatability of provincially imposed reforms.[129] Formal responses from the municipalities showed more consensus on Scheme B

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[125] Ibid.

[126] Ibid.

[127] Fyfe and Farrow, "Report of Findings and Recommendations," 185–86.

[128] Bales, "The Regional Municipality of Waterloo," 4.

[129] When announcing the planned system, the Honourable Dalton Bales, Minister of Municipal Affairs, acknowledged the coordinational appeal of a full amalgamation into one municipal organization, but dismissed it

among the local municipalities than on any other option.[130] Eight of the 16 municipalities

supported some form of regional government, and these eight included the County, the cities of

Galt and Waterloo, and Waterloo Township. Only four supported a reorganized city-county

system modeled on Scheme A.[131] Kitchener was alone in arguing for a one-tier

amalgamation.[132][133]

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entirely. He noted that the "perhaps … overwhelming" reason to reject such a scheme, beyond the diversity present

in the area, was the fact that so few expressed support for it. "It is obvious," he said, "that the vast majority of

people will not accept such a scheme. We would not propose a scheme which has no chance of receiving fairly

widespread acceptability across the region as a whole, and it is obvious that the residents of the Waterloo County

area are not ready to make the jump to a one-tier municipality." Ibid., 5.

[130] Wilmot suggested that provincial funding changes should precede local government changes, and did

not express a preference for Scheme A or B. Ontario Department of Municipal Affairs, "Waterloo: Local

Government Reform Proposals," March 16, 1971, 9–10. The Town of Elmira did not see much change under either

Scheme A or Scheme B, since Fyfe had proposed that it remain in both schemes, and thus it did not express an

opinion on either option. Ibid., 15–16. Elmira might well have been surprised to find its amalgamation with the

Townships of Woolwich and Waterloo proposed by the province. Bales, "The Regional Municipality of Waterloo,"

6. There is no record of any submission from the Township of Wellesley in the "Responses from the Region"

portion of the document made available by the province. Ontario Department of Municipal Affairs, "Waterloo:

Local Government Reform Proposals."

[131] Ontario Department of Municipal Affairs, "Waterloo: Local Government Reform Proposals," 1–21.

[132] Ibid., 18.

[133] While these indications of local government support are important, they should not be overstated. Many

of the municipalities supporting one option or the other at the same time said that no amalgamation would be

necessary at all, or at least that their own municipality should continue to exist under the option they supported. Yet

a general tendency to support a two-tier regional option was clearly visible.

Thus Kitchener's manifest destiny lurked in the background, and the smaller changes proposed by Fyfe failed to satisfy many of those who were embroiled in the fractious planning politics of the day. As Elizabeth Bloomfield describes the comments of "one critic," "Fyfe seemed … to be more concerned with a political scientist's principles of accountability, responsibility, community of interest and simplicity than with the acute planning problems that had prompted the whole exercise."[134] Since the government was, it said, concerned with some minimal level of political palatability, local public opinion made its choice of a two-tier regional government that much easier.

Conclusion

The province's choice to institute regional government in the area was largely due to concerns over planning and growth management. Fragmentation of municipal government eventually overwhelmed efforts to solve planning coordination problems through more collaborative local efforts. Local conflicts over planning and the ensuing frustration supported the province's commitment to turn local government institutions on their heads and design local government structures that for the first time would intentionally join urban and rural communities together.

The Region of Waterloo was created, comprised of four rural and three urban area municipalities. While the former city/county system was based on explicit municipal separation between neighbouring urban and rural areas, the new regional structure would combine jurisdiction for services like policing, landfills, public health, and welfare into a single regional government,[135] while leaving local matters to urban and rural municipalities of an increased size.

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[134] Bloomfield, *Waterloo Township through Two Centuries*, 396.

[135] Palmer, "Report of the Waterloo Region Review Commission," 28–36.

A two-tiered regional government system would be expected to address fragmentation and the

conflict it had engendered, and to provide both regional government and regional planning. It

had its work cut out for it.
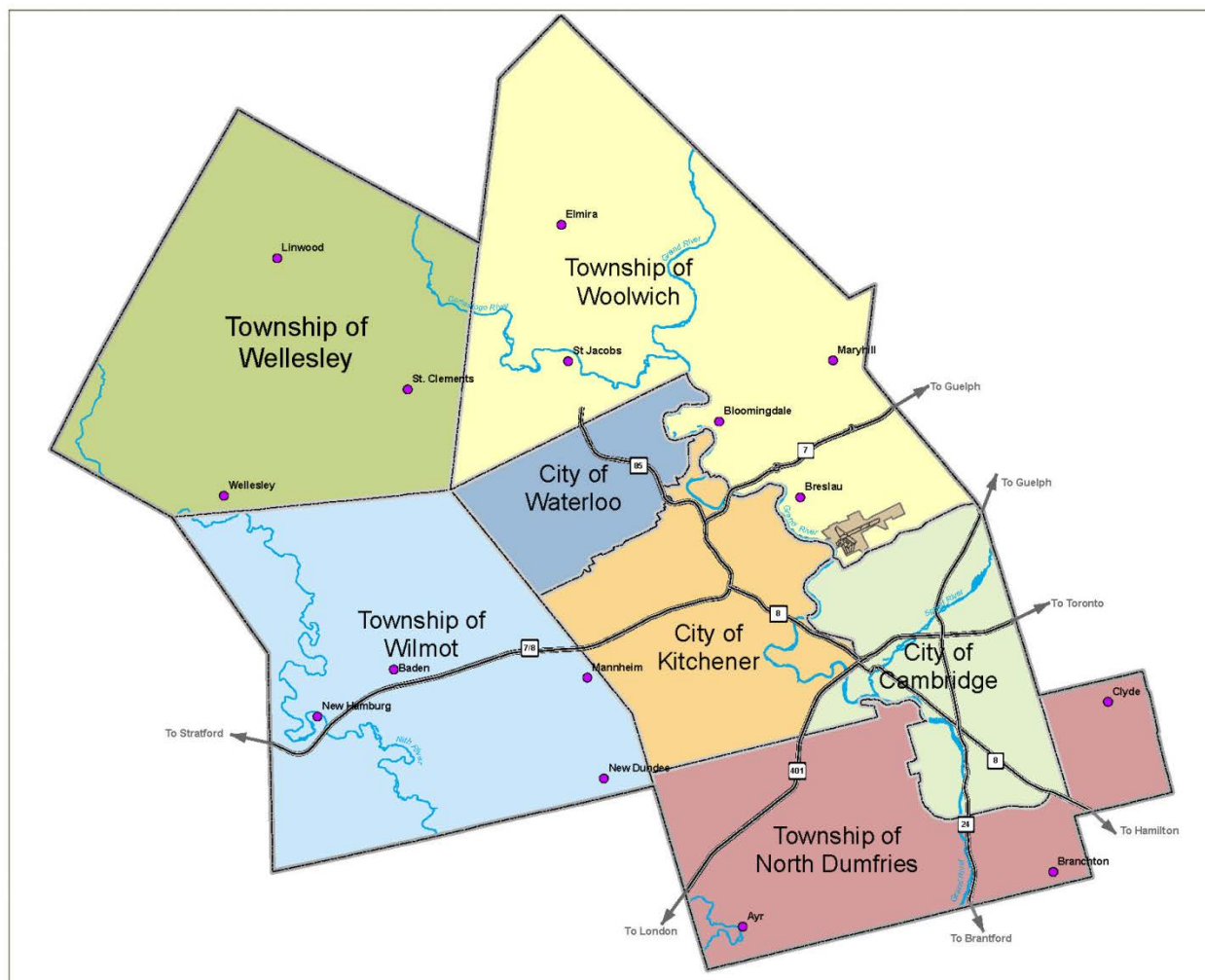
Figure 2: The Region of Waterloo and area municipalities. Source: Corporate Services, Information Technology Services, Region of Waterloo. Copyright: Region of Waterloo. Used with permission.

Chapter 4: Defining Regional Relationships through Planning

Introduction

Stewart Fyfe did not want regional government for the Waterloo area. Despite this, he would later say of the 10 regional systems created at the time, "My impression is that Waterloo regional government was the best of the lot."[1] Local politicians "were used to working together," he added.[2] He was not alone in this view. Over the years, it has been said that "Waterloo Region [is] the region that works."[3]

Despite clearly visible collaborative impulses among local officials, the retrospective success of regional government in the Waterloo area could not have been presumed at its founding. On January 1, 1973, two-tier regional government took effect.[4] In what remained of the 20th century, Waterloo Region would further entrench the dispersed city form for which it would, by the 1990s, become emblematic.[5] Yet consistent with the conflicts and collaboration that preceded regional government, local officials would negotiate regional relationships in the context of planning. This ongoing negotiation, and the institutions and policies that emerged from it, would prepare Waterloo Region to embrace smart growth policies in the next century.

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[1] Jeff Outhit, "Region Celebrates 40 Years as One Big Family Region Has Low Profile, Big Budget," *Waterloo Region Record*, January 5, 2013, First edition, sec. News.

[2] Ibid.

[3] Ken Seiling, interview by author, Kitchener, ON.

[4] Outhit, "Region Celebrates 40 Years as One Big Family Region Has Low Profile, Big Budget."

[5] Filion, Bunting, and Curtis, *The Dynamics of the Dispersed City*.

I begin by describing the new regional government system, with particular focus on the broad conceptual features of regional government, and on the shape and politics of the new area municipalities. I then show that the creation of the first Regional Official Policies Plan in the 1970s was a major process through which the relationships between the new regional and area municipal governments would be negotiated, and highlight some of the important policies that emerged from that process. I finally show that, while explicit planning changes in the 1990s were important, it was really the redefinition of regional relationships in that decade that would prepare Waterloo Region for smart growth policies in the 21st century.

The New Regional System

On January 1, 1973, the Waterloo area awoke as Waterloo Region.[6] As Minister Bales clearly intended, regional government would require that urban and rural areas solve more problems together. The particularities of the new two-tiered system reflected a particular set of assumptions about how regional government should function, at both the regional and area municipal levels.

Regional council itself was the body that most clearly expressed those assumptions. As political scientist Terrence J. Downey explains, despite the "radical" aspects of regional government, "the various regional governments were and are essentially modified county systems."[7] In Waterloo Region as elsewhere, Downey notes, representation at the Region of Waterloo reflected three "important ideas and assumptions about the roles of upper and lower

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[6] See Ontario, "C 105 The Regional Municipality of Waterloo Act, 1972," *Ontario: Annual Statutes* 1972, no. 1 (January 1, 1972), http://digitalcommons.osgoode.yorku.ca/ontario_statutes/vol1972/iss1/107.

[7] Terrence J. Downey, "Governance in the Regional Municipality of Waterloo," July 1995, 3.

tier councils."[8] First, regional council was designed to strongly "represent the interests of the area municipalities," and thus no one was directly elected to regional council, as it was assumed that this would make the Region too powerful.[9] All elected representatives would also sit on the council of their local area municipality.

Second, election of the regional chair by a vote of council, in what was essentially an appointment, "emphasized the notion of the Region as a federation, and reflected the idea that the Chair is an arbiter of conflicting demands who facilitates relations among the municipal representatives and their many and various interests," and not "a superior official to other Regional Councillors."[10] Any person could be appointed as chair, but if a current councillor was selected, her or his seat on the area municipal council would be declared vacant.[11] As the only representative on regional council who would not also sit on an area municipal council, the chair would be, as W.H. Palmer wrote, "the only person who speaks from a solely regional perspective,"[12] and his position would not be legitimized by any form of election by the public.

Third, council did not follow either representation by population or representation by "constituent unit;" instead, each municipality would have their mayor on regional council as a representative, and the rest would be from the more populous municipalities.[13] This was "a compromise model" that "recognized that the Region was not a heterogeneous unit, and it

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[8] Ibid., 5.

[9] Ibid.

[10] Ibid.

[11] Ontario, "C 105 The Regional Municipality of Waterloo Act, 1972," sec. 8(3).

[12] W. H. Palmer, J. G. Church, and W. E. Winegard, "Representation and the Electoral System in the Region of Waterloo" (Waterloo, ON: Waterloo Region Review Commission, September 1978), 135.

[13] Downey, "Governance in the Regional Municipality of Waterloo," 5.

reflected an effort to accommodate the concerns of all."[14] Thus Stewart Fyfe's concern about urban areas overwhelming rural representation would be tempered by only a partial commitment to representation by population. The new regional council initially consisted of 25 members, including its appointed chairman and the heads of council of each of the seven local-tier area municipalities. Seventeen additional members, who had been elected to their area municipal councils,[15] would serve by municipality: four for Cambridge, eight for Kitchener, two for Waterloo, one for Wilmot, and two for Woolwich.[16] The results of the compromise model of representation outlined above were that urban councillors represented approximately 15,000 constituents each, while rural councillors represented approximately 5,000 each.[17] In concert, the three features Downey describes outline a regional council with a particular balance between urban and rural representation, and with its focus and legitimacy vested in the local-tier area municipalities.

At the area municipal level, the provincial government's commitment to larger municipal units with more capacity meant that fifteen local municipalities would become seven.[18] The City of Cambridge would be formed largely out of three separate communities: the City of Galt, the Town of Hespeler, and the Town of Preston. The City of Waterloo and the City of Kitchener

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[14] Ibid.

[15] The Wilmot councillor, however, was elected to a joint position to serve on both councils. This is known as double-direct election. The remaining 16 were selected based either on receiving more votes than their colleagues in the election for local-tier seats, or by vote of the area municipal council. Palmer, Church, and Winegard, "Representation and the Electoral System in the Region of Waterloo," 19–20, 50.

[16] Ontario, "C 105 The Regional Municipality of Waterloo Act, 1972," sec. 8(1).

[17] Palmer, "Report of the Waterloo Region Review Commission," 125–27.

[18] Ontario, "C 105 The Regional Municipality of Waterloo Act, 1972."

would remain, with Kitchener taking over the Village of Bridgeport. There would be four

townships, retaining their original names, which would result from an administrative merger

between the townships and the remaining towns and villages within them.[19] The remaining lands

in Waterloo Township, hardest hit by the massive urban expansions and annexations of the

preceding decades, would be split between Kitchener, Waterloo, Cambridge and Woolwich

Township.[20]

With this arrangement, each of the three cities would gain considerable lands within their

new boundaries. They would have substantial room for urban expansion,[21] without requiring

further annexations.

These new area municipalities would face their own challenges, and some areas more

than others faced considerable conflict, both over the local amalgamations and boundary

changes, and over inclusion in the Region. Of particular note was dissent over the new

arrangements from the new City of Cambridge. Commissioner W.H. Palmer, appointed to

conduct a review of the new system in the late 1970s, would have to respond to demands that

Cambridge should secede from the new regional government, which had been affirmed in a

referendum in 1978.[22] As he describes,

> On the one hand, we are faced with a tradition of co-operation and interrelation between
> the north and south parts of the Region dating back to 1852 and the first days of Waterloo

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[19] The Township of North Dumfries would also absorb a small part of neighbouring Beverly Township.
Ibid., 716.

[20] The Regional Municipality of Waterloo Act, 1972 specified a variety of other small boundary
adjustments between the resulting seven local-tier municipalities.

[21] Regional Municipality of Waterloo, "Bylaw Number 75-75: A by-Law to Adopt the Regional Official
Policies Plan for the Waterloo Planning Area," December 7, 1976, 3.1, ROW 3-6/2, Region of Waterloo Archives.

[22] Palmer, "Report of the Waterloo Region Review Commission," 61–62; Sancton, *Merger Mania*, 50–51.

County. On the other, we are faced with what has always been a rivalry between the two major urban complexes of this region.[23]

Beyond this ongoing rivalry across the north-south dividing line of Highway 401, Cambridge had to contend with a new urban municipality formed out of three distinctive downtowns with strong identities. They had been subjected by the province to what Cambridge's Archives and Records Centre still describes on the city's website as a "shotgun marriage" between three communities that had previously had a "healthy sense of rivalry."[24] While Cambridge would undoubtedly settle into its new arrangement, distinctive community identities would persist for decades.[25]

The region's municipalities, then, were sorting through their own new identities, practices, and boundaries as of January 1, 1973. Yet they would also have to develop a new set of relationships with the regional level of government, and with each other.

Negotiating New Relationships

The Waterloo Region Review Commission, tasked in the late 1970s with assessing the results of the new system in its first few years, generally found that regional government had met many of its aims,[26] and that "on balance, … the improvements have far outweighed the

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[23] Palmer, "Report of the Waterloo Region Review Commission," 61.

[24] "Evolution of Cambridge," *City of Cambridge*, accessed June 24, 2016, http://www.cambridge.ca/city_clerk/cambridge_archives_and_records_centre/evolution_of_cambridge.

[25] The City of Cambridge's website notes that "Even today, while our residents will tell the outside world that they call Cambridge home, they will often identify themselves to each other as citizens of Galt or Preston or Hespeler." Ibid. It is still common to hear Cambridge residents use these descriptors across Waterloo Region, more than 40 years later.

[26] Palmer, "Report of the Waterloo Region Review Commission," 27–36.

declines."[27] The process, however, was not always smooth. A significant challenge of the two-tier amalgamation was determining who had jurisdiction over what, and what relationship the two levels of government would have with each other.

These problems extended to planning, which was a file on which the Region would have its hands full. As the municipal affairs minister had suggested years earlier,[28] planning in two-tier regions would be divided between the two levels of government. While legislation gave the new regional government responsibility for establishing an official plan with which its own decisions must conform, and with which area municipalities' official plans and zoning must conform as well, it did not say much more.[29] As W.H. Palmer would note, that was all the guidance that new regional systems would get from the relevant legislation: "The *Regional Act* does not stipulate the matters to be dealt with by the regional plan, or how, if at all, these matters are to be distinguished from those dealt with in area municipal plans."[30]

Despite the uncertainty of its enabling legislation, like the nine other new regional municipalities, the Region of Waterloo was required to create its first regional official plan within three years of its creation.[31] Fortunately, the Region had significant and collaborative work from the former Waterloo County Area Planning Board on which to build.[32] Of the new

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[27] Ibid., 36.

[28] McKeough, "Statement by the Honourable W. Darcy McKeough," 6.

[29] Ontario, "C 105 The Regional Municipality of Waterloo Act, 1972," sec. 94(6); Palmer, "Report of the Waterloo Region Review Commission," 229.

[30] Palmer, "Report of the Waterloo Region Review Commission," 229.

[31] Palmer, Church, and Winegard, "A Collection of Perspectives on Municipal Planning," 16.

[32] Regional Municipality of Waterloo, *The Regional Official Policies Plan Appendix: Regional Municipality of Waterloo A Moment in Time* (Waterloo, Ont.: Regional Municipality of Waterloo, n.d.), 16.3-16.5.

regional governments, only the Region of Waterloo would meet the three-year provincial

deadline.[33][34]

Yet even while succeeding within this short timeframe, there was significant conflict to

manage and resolve. Some planning tensions and lingering conflicts continued through the

restructuring and related amalgamations. Kitchener had aggressively pursued annexation of 6500

acres of land in Waterloo Township during the local government review,[35] and afterward

continued to pursue annexation of 1100 acres of Cambridge land for industrial purposes within

the regional system.[36] Kitchener's desire to annex more industrial land survived amalgamation

largely intact.[37]

While Kitchener's planners had lost their bid for one-tier government, they had not

completely lost the battle. Those who shared their vision would find a prominent place in the

new regional government. Kitchener councillor Jack Young, who just a few years earlier had

called for Stewart Fyfe's resignation from the local government review for advocating delay on

Kitchener's annexation proposal in Waterloo Township,[38] would be appointed by the provincial

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[33] Palmer, Church, and Winegard, "A Collection of Perspectives on Municipal Planning," 16.

[34] The minister, John R. Rhodes, signed this first regional plan at a "regular regional council meeting," in

what Bill Thomson describes as "an auspicious beginning." Regional Municipality of Waterloo, *The Regional

Official Policies Plan Appendix: Regional Municipality of Waterloo A Moment in Time*, i.

[35] Bloomfield, *Waterloo Township through Two Centuries*, 396.

[36] Palmer, "Report of the Waterloo Region Review Commission," 107–11.

[37] In the context of the financial incentives and competitive pressures that Ontario municipalities face, it is

not surprising that securing adequate sites for private industrial and business activity has been an ongoing concern in

the Region of Waterloo's major planning documents over the last many decades. This is a theme that returns to this

story with the Region's particular approach to smart growth in the following century.

[38] Bloomfield, *Waterloo Township through Two Centuries*, 396.

government as the first regional chair.[39] Young had worked with Bill Thomson, the planner

behind Kitchener 2000,[40] on a heavily centralized, backroom downtown revitalization effort.[41]

As Kent Gerecke writes, "Young wanted Thomson as his regional planner, Thomson wanted

more power, and both got their way."[42] Thomson, an early and outspoken advocate for one-tier

government,[43] would lead the process to create the new Regional Official Policies Plan (often

called the ROPP). Thomson was perhaps the consummate planner of the rational comprehensive

era, depicted in a 1976 work on planning in Canadian cities as without self-doubt about the role

of planners and the substance of the public interest.[44] Conflicts with his area municipal

counterparts in the cities of Waterloo, Kitchener, and Cambridge were at times personal, and

very much in the public eye.[45] This is perhaps the most striking example of the fact that those

tasked with negotiating regional relationships came with a great deal of baggage, particularly on

the planning matters at hand.[46]

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[39] Christian Aagaard, "Three Candidates Want to Make Regional History," *Kitchener-Waterloo Record*, November 7, 1997, Final edition, sec. Front.

[40] Kitchener Planning Department, *Kitchener 2000 and a Plan of Action*.

[41] Kent Gerecke, "Waterloo's Bill Thomson: Planning for Power," in *The City Book: The Politics and Planning of Canada's Cities* (Toronto: James Lorimer & Company, 1976), 71.

[42] Ibid., 73.

[43] Bloomfield, *Waterloo Township through Two Centuries*, 383.

[44] Gerecke, "Waterloo's Bill Thomson: Planning for Power."

[45] Ibid., 73.

[46] This account focuses on Thomson's reputation with respect to collaboration with other municipalities. Another approach focused more closely on the role and dominance of business interests, such as growth machine or regime theory, would highlight Thomson's skill in pursuing business development, often over the interests or stated objectives of communities. As Kent Gerecke wrote in the 1970s, "city planning" in "Thomson's overt style … is

In the context of the Region's frenzied work toward a new Official Plan, the appropriate split between regional and area municipal authority on planning became contentious. Public controversy erupted with "fears that Regional Planning was taking over."[47] As an enormous document from the Region accompanying the ROPP, and prefaced by Bill Thomson, would colourfully describe:

> While the relationship between Regional and Area Planners never reached the level of the internecine wars of the Roman Republic, controversy did become public in 1974 regarding the responsibility of each level of the two-tier system. Some of the arguments had the flavour of being left-overs from earlier debate as to whether or not there should be regional government.[48]

Though these issues settled down somewhat, at least in the public's view,[49] the struggle over the limits of the Region's role in planning would continue. Animosity between the Kitchener and Cambridge planning directors and Thomson would be publicly documented,[50] but things were perhaps even worse behind the scenes. As one of the Region's former planners says, "My understanding [was] that there was actually a fistfight in one of the planning committee meetings. The early ones. Where planning was a huge issue between the upper and the lower tier, right at the very beginning of time."[51]

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bent on serving business and the development industry in the promotion of growth. And, finally, it promotes optimum public confusion to avoid citizen participation. Bill Thomson has no doubts about these matters. This is what makes him an ideal planner for the local business elite." Ibid., 76.

[47] Regional Municipality of Waterloo, *The Regional Official Policies Plan Appendix: Regional Municipality of Waterloo A Moment in Time*, 16.26.

[48] Ibid., 16.25.

[49] Ibid., 16.24.

[50] Gerecke, "Waterloo's Bill Thomson: Planning for Power," 73.

[51] Kevin Eby, interview by author, Waterloo, ON, April 27, 2016.

Behind the interpersonal animosity[52] was a real disagreement about how planning should be conducted in the new two-tier system. With its first version of the plan,[53] passed by regional council and submitted for ministerial approval in late 1975,[54] some of the urban municipalities expressed concerns that the Region was exceeding its bounds. Having envisioned a relationship based on the cooperation of "equal partners," a committee of staff in Waterloo and Kitchener[55] felt that the Region was exceeding its authority under provincial legislation.[56] They also felt that the Region was attempting to gain legal powers not granted to them in the *Act* by simply claiming them in the Official Plan.[57]

Early in 1976, J.R. Darrah of the City of Kitchener described the committee's concerns about the regional relationship in a letter to the Region's chief administrator:

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[52] Tensions between Kitchener and Cambridge planning staff and regional planning staff was, in the late 1970s, seen as a problem by at least some developers. In a 1978 report, the Waterloo Region Review Commission conducted a questionnaire of those in the industry, and would summarize, "With the relatively large planning staffs in Kitchener and Cambridge, some sources felt that both personalities and 'empires' were at loggerheads with their counterparts in the Regional Municipality, 'over developers' dead bodies.'" Palmer, Church, and Winegard, "A Collection of Perspectives on Municipal Planning," 26.

[53] Regional Municipality of Waterloo, "Bylaw Number 57-75: A by-Law to Adopt the Regional Official Policies Plan for the Waterloo Planning Area," November 27, 1975, ROW 3-6/7/2, Region of Waterloo Archives.

[54] Regional Municipality of Waterloo, *The Regional Official Policies Plan Appendix: Regional Municipality of Waterloo A Moment in Time*, 16.3.

[55] J.R. Darrah, "Re: Regional Official Policies Plan," May 11, 1976, ROW 3-6/7/2, Region of Waterloo Archives.

[56] J.R. Darrah, "Re: Regional Official Policies Plan," May 7, 1976, ROW 3-6/7/2, Region of Waterloo Archives.

[57] Ibid.

> After several years of discussions leading to regional government, we finally arrived at a reasonable agreement on a two-tier system within which the Region and the seven area municipalities would co-operate as equal partners for the good of all. The Regional Chairman, Mr. Young, has expressed this point by comparing the Region to a wheel. The area municipalities are the spokes, the Regional government the hub, and all must work together to progress.
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> The Regional Official Policies Plan as originally drafted, seems to entirely miss this co-operative aspect. Rather, it attempts to impose upon the area municipalities many controls and requirements which, particularly in the field of planning, effectively reduce the area municipalities to the status of branch offices for the Region. To return to Mr. Young's analogy, after reading the plan I can still visualize the area municipalities as the spokes of a wheel. However the Region is now the rim – solid steel, case-hardened and firmly binding the area municipalities in their place.[58]

The group proposed specific changes to the text of the Plan. They stated that they desired a local negotiated solution, but threatened that they would fight the existing version of the ROPP at the Ontario Municipal Board or in court if a solution was not found.[59]

As Kent Gerecke describes the Region's efforts to create the 1975 version of the ROPP, "city planning … is an activity which promotes the centralization of power as in the constitution for one-tier government hidden in the draft regional plan and in the concentration of power with planners."[60] In effect, he says, "The dominant strategy of the regional plan … is the use of the plan as a vehicle for centralized power in the regional government and in Thomson's department."[61]

While these very public battles were brewing largely at the staff level, a related dynamic had to some extent emerged among the elected regional councillors, all of whom also sat on the council of their area municipality. As Palmer would describe in 1979, a significant portion of regional council had found reason to "play a Jekyll and Hyde game" in which they work hard at

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[58] Ibid.

[59] Ibid.

[60] Gerecke, "Waterloo's Bill Thomson: Planning for Power," 76.

[61] Ibid., 75.

the regional level to address problems and "speak in glowing terms of the regional staff," but "These same people return to their local councils and harangue the Region for what 'they' did."[62] Palmer cites Kitchener's complaints about the ROPP process as a particular example. Thus, political dynamics arising out of the joint role held by councillors on both their area and regional councils did not necessarily combat the adversarial elements of the work being done by staff, and particularly by planners, at this time.

These conflicts were difficult, but they did lead to change. The plan was, as Palmer put it, "amended after some opposition from Kitchener and Waterloo."[63] The final version of the plan, passed in late 1976,[64] incorporated a number of changes, including the much more prominent placement of a section on The Region And the Area Municipalities, which was now given its own chapter. It contained noticeably softened and more collaborative language compared to the initial version, including the removal of language suggesting that the Region had unilaterally adopted procedures to solve the jurisdictional uncertainty left by the province.[65] Some changes showed a new and explicit deference to provincial decisions on the Region's planning

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[62] Palmer, "Report of the Waterloo Region Review Commission," 137.

[63] Ibid., 229.

[64] Regional Municipality of Waterloo, "Bylaw Number 75-75: A by-Law to Adopt the Regional Official Policies Plan for the Waterloo Planning Area."

[65] The initial version specifies: "To accomplish this objective, the following procedures have been adopted by the Region." Regional Municipality of Waterloo, "Bylaw Number 57-75: A by-Law to Adopt the Regional Official Policies Plan for the Waterloo Planning Area," 1.3. The second version says "the policies that follow should assist in the preparation and clarification of the Area Municipal Official Plans or Amendments thereto." Regional Municipality of Waterloo, "Bylaw Number 75-75: A by-Law to Adopt the Regional Official Policies Plan for the Waterloo Planning Area," 2.2.

jurisdiction.[66] An additional numbered goal was added to the Goals of the Plan section, making explicit that one of the plan's aims was "To preserve strong local government in accordance with the two-tier system of planning and local government established under The Regional Municipality of Waterloo Act, 1972."[67] The final version also changes descriptions that the area municipalities "shall" prepare area official plans and that those plans will serve a particular purpose,[68] and instead suggests what any area official plans "should" or "may" do.[69]

The Region also backed down on its explicit plans to later adopt area municipal plan land use maps as part of the ROPP, and that consistency between them would thus be "imperative."[70]

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[66] For example, a section on Matters of Regional Significance was shortened to indicate merely that "The Regional Municipality of Waterloo may comment on the Regional Significance of any Area Official Plan or Amendment thereto, Implementation Plan or Restricted Area By-law in accordance with the procedures established by the Minister of Housing, the Ontario Municipal Board or other legal authority." Regional Municipality of Waterloo, "Bylaw Number 75-75: A by-Law to Adopt the Regional Official Policies Plan for the Waterloo Planning Area," 2.3. The same section in the previous version was more than a page long, and indicated that regional council approval was "required" for zoning bylaws, and that regional council will analyze all planning and development proposals to "determine whether a matter is of Regional Significance." Regional Municipality of Waterloo, "Bylaw Number 57-75: A by-Law to Adopt the Regional Official Policies Plan for the Waterloo Planning Area," 2.2-2.3.

[67] Regional Municipality of Waterloo, "Bylaw Number 75-75: A by-Law to Adopt the Regional Official Policies Plan for the Waterloo Planning Area," 4.1.

[68] Regional Municipality of Waterloo, "Bylaw Number 57-75: A by-Law to Adopt the Regional Official Policies Plan for the Waterloo Planning Area," 1.4.

[69] Regional Municipality of Waterloo, "Bylaw Number 75-75: A by-Law to Adopt the Regional Official Policies Plan for the Waterloo Planning Area," 2.2.

[70] The original text that was removed read, "When an Area Municipal Official Plan is approved by the Regional Council the future land use map it contains will consequently become part of the Regional Official Policies Plan. The result of this will be that the future land use map of the Region will consist of the seven such maps of the

This appears to be an extension of a much more significant compromise, namely the decision to

set a policy plan rather than a "land use plan."[71] The compromise was adopted by Planning

Commissioner Bill Thomson as part of the ROPP process, despite his strong reputation for

pursuing his own approach. As Kevin Eby, former director of community planning for the

Region, explains

> Bill made a strategic decision, which exists to this day, which is: we have the only
> policy plan in Ontario. Everybody else has land use plans. So our plan sets envelopes
> for land uses. But … other than regional shopping centres and now some of the
> prime industrial lands, we don't provide land use designations. That's entirely left to
> the local municipal level. [Other regions] designate residential, they designate
> industrial. … And that causes endless [conflict]. It just goes on forever. But when
> Bill made the strategic decision in the 70s, when they wrote the first plan in 1976, to
> frame it as a policies plan, that allowed us to really separate the two levels into long-
> range planning and then kind of a local plan.[72]

This broad approach was visible in the initial plan, given the expectation that the area

municipalities would create their own area plans with land use maps for regional approval.

Removal of the section on map incorporation perhaps shows even more deference to the area

municipalities to create their own land use plans within the Region's envelopes. Thus the

structure of the ROPP would preserve an important level of planning at the area municipal level.

After revisions, the finally approved 1976 version of the ROPP showed a notable increase

in deference to the area municipalities on local planning matters. These changes, however,

should not be overstated. A direct comparison of the "Summary of the Plan" chapter in each

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Area Municipalities. It will be imperative that the land use classifications be similar on each Area Official Land Use

Map. To assure similarity, the Regional Council will co-ordinate the land use classifications on Area Official Land

Use Maps in co-operation with the Area Municipal Councils. Regional Municipality of Waterloo, "Bylaw Number

57-75: A by-Law to Adopt the Regional Official Policies Plan for the Waterloo Planning Area," 1.4.

[71] Kevin Eby, interview by author, Waterloo, ON.

[72] Ibid.

document shows that no substantive changes were made to the focus of the plan in the second version.[73] The major policy approaches remained largely unchanged. While some language changes clearly signify increased attention to collaboration with rather than domination of the area municipalities, the revised plan still continues to focus on the requirement, specified clearly in *The Regional Municipality of Waterloo Act, 1972*, that local-tier official plans must conform to the Region's official plan, once that plan has been approved by the minister.[74] The 1975 plan was, in most respects, not significantly transformed by the 1976 plan. In many ways, the Region had asserted its primacy. As Regional Chair Ken Seiling says,

> Early on, the region asserted itself as the primary planning authority. Which was different than [what] happened in some of the other regions, where … they made sure that the region's role was reduced and…the lower tiers drove it. Here, the regional plan was the major document. I think the region was seen as the primary planning agency.[75]

Regional government would be at the centre of planning in the decades to come.

Yet with respect to the relationship between regional and local tiers, many of the Region's efforts to control planning had been at least somewhat tempered in the early back-and-forth of the official plan process. Through the process to create the ROPP, the area municipalities had established that they would continue to demand meaningful influence over planning within their jurisdictions. The process certainly did not resolve all disagreements between the local

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[73] Regional Municipality of Waterloo, "Bylaw Number 57-75: A by-Law to Adopt the Regional Official Policies Plan for the Waterloo Planning Area," 2.1-2.2; Regional Municipality of Waterloo, "Bylaw Number 75-75: A by-Law to Adopt the Regional Official Policies Plan for the Waterloo Planning Area," chap. 4.

[74] Ontario, "C 105 The Regional Municipality of Waterloo Act, 1972," sec. 94 (6).

[75] Ken Seiling, interview by author, Kitchener, ON.

municipalities on who would do what, and complaints about "nit-picking" and "intrusion into local affairs" on planning matters continued.[76] Yet some initial parameters had been set.

Despite the conflict, or even because of it, the creation of the revised ROPP should be seen as an example of success within the new regional arrangement. Broadly, the regional system had accomplished what the former arrangement could not: approval of a real plan for both the urban and rural parts of the Waterloo area. At the same time, the new system had responded to a lack of clarity and attempts at control with conflict, compromise, and change.

The 1976 Regional Official Policies Plan

The result of this conflictual but ultimately conciliatory process would be a Regional Official Policies Plan that would set the terms for planning in Waterloo Region for the decades to come. In the 1976 ROPP, the Region presumed, like the planners and officials before regional amalgamation, that growth would occur. While acknowledging that trends suggested future population growth would not be on the same scale as the growth that came before it, the ROPP anticipated that the 1974 population of 227,284 would grow to at least 531,200 by 2001.[77] Nevertheless, many in the community had expressed that they did not necessarily want growth at all. At 26 meetings in late 1973, as Kent Gerecke writes, "The dominant response at all meetings was a desire for a zero or slow growth option."[78] In 1974, a series of policy papers were prepared to provide background and justification for what were generally the same growth-oriented

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[76] Palmer, "Report of the Waterloo Region Review Commission," 36.

[77] Regional Municipality of Waterloo, "Bylaw Number 75-75: A by-Law to Adopt the Regional Official Policies Plan for the Waterloo Planning Area," 5.1-5.3.

[78] Gerecke, "Waterloo's Bill Thomson: Planning for Power," 73.

approaches.[79] In response to the growth paper,[80] regional planning staff reported that most public responses indicated that growth should be slowed, and regional council had decided to delay attempts to constrain growth to 2.5% per year until 1981.[81] Despite this delayed and minor constraint, this was what regional planning staff had generally recommended in the first place.[82]

So the Region would continue to plan for considerable population growth.[83] In so doing, they would set four key policies that would have continuing relevance for smart growth in future decades: settlement patterns, Environmentally Sensitive Policy Areas, a transit corridor, and farmland severance policies.[84]

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[79] Ibid., 74–75.

[80] Regional Municipality of Waterloo, "Policy Paper No. 1 Leading to the Regional Official Policies Plan: 'Growth,'" in *The Regional Official Policies Plan Appendix: Regional Municipality of Waterloo A Moment in Time*, 1 vols. (Waterloo, Ont.: Regional Municipality of Waterloo, 1974).

[81] Regional Municipality of Waterloo, *The Regional Official Policies Plan Appendix: Regional Municipality of Waterloo A Moment in Time*, 16.8.

[82] Regional Municipality of Waterloo, "Policy Paper No. 1 Leading to the Regional Official Policies Plan: 'Growth,'" 2.

[83] Currently, municipal incentives for population growth and the development that accompanies its accommodation are exacerbated by the property tax system. Increases in a particular property's value does not increase the tax revenue municipalities collect from it; reassessments merely redistribute the proportion of existing municipal revenues paid by the owner of each existing property. In contrast, new developments increase the total amount of revenue collected by municipalities.

[84] The latter three of these would be identified by former regional planner Kevin Eby as key features of the first ROPP. Kevin Eby, interview by author, Waterloo, ON.

First, the ROPP outlined various settlement policy areas to shape settlement patterns in the region.[85] Settlement areas for the three cities would be available for potential urban expansion up to 2001, and similar areas were set around existing major settlements in the townships. Areas were also identified in the historic cores of Waterloo, Kitchener, Galt, Hespeler, Preston, New Hamburg, Wellesley, and Elmira, where "redevelopment, rehabilitation and conservation … is encouraged."[86] The remaining lands in the region, largely rural, had their own policy area. New and expanded settlements in this area "may be considered," but "consideration must be given to constraints of … Agricultural Lands, Sand and Gravel Resources, Floodplains and Environmentally Sensitive Areas."[87] These policy areas were, as former regional planner Kevin Eby describes them, "blobs on the map," and "the actual [urban area] boundary was determined through the local plan approval."[88] Despite their generality, and despite the plan's significant deference to area municipal land use planning, the ROPP would set an early region-level direction for which areas were targeted for urban development.

The second key feature was the establishment of Environmentally Sensitive Policy Areas.[89] The 1976 ROPP was the first time any municipal government had included "an

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[85] Regional Municipality of Waterloo, "Bylaw Number 75-75: A by-Law to Adopt the Regional Official Policies Plan for the Waterloo Planning Area," chap. 7.

[86] Ibid., 7.2.

[87] Ibid.

[88] Kevin Eby, interview by author, Waterloo, ON.

[89] Regional Municipality of Waterloo, "Bylaw Number 75-75: A by-Law to Adopt the Regional Official Policies Plan for the Waterloo Planning Area," chap. 13.

environmental policy in an official plan,"[90] and the Region's ESPAs were "the first municipally designated environmentally sensitive areas in Ontario."[91] The ROPP identified 69 policy areas, outlined on an accompanying map, upon which landowners would be allowed to continue a number of existing uses. The ROPP required Environmental Impact Statements for potential changes to land use in these areas, and required alternatives to be considered for serious impacts. Land use changes shown to have serious impacts were only possible with an amendment to the ROPP.[92]

The policies were put in place "after long discussions with affected landowners."[93] The Region began by sending 1250 letters to affected property owners, of which 100 requested a "site meeting with the staff" at the properties in question about possible adjustments to the policies or maps.[94] This process left only 15 who were not satisfied and continued the discussion at a regional committee. Only two landowners, both with urban development aspirations, were still

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[90] Paule Ouellet, "Environmentally Sensitive Policy Areas as a Tool for Environmental Protection," in *The Dynamics of the Dispersed City: Geographic and Planning Perspectives on Waterloo Region*, ed. Pierre Filion, Trudi E. Bunting, and Kevin Curtis, Department of Geography Publication Series ; No. 47 (Waterloo, Ont: Dept. of Geography, University of Waterloo, 1996), 373–98.

[91] Christopher Gosselin, "Natural Area Policies, Regional Municipality of Waterloo, 1973 to 2001 and beyond," in *Protected Areas and the Regional Planning Imperative in North America: Integrating Nature Conservation and Sustainable Development*, ed. John C. Day, J. G. Nelson, and Lucy M. Sportza, Parks and Heritage Series 7 (Calgary, Alta: University of Calgary Press, 2003), 93.

[92] See Regional Municipality of Waterloo, "Bylaw Number 75-75: A by-Law to Adopt the Regional Official Policies Plan for the Waterloo Planning Area," 13.6-13.15.

[93] Gosselin, "Natural Area Policies, Regional Municipality of Waterloo, 1973 to 2001 and beyond," 96.

[94] Regional Municipality of Waterloo, *The Regional Official Policies Plan Appendix: Regional Municipality of Waterloo A Moment in Time*, 16.17-16.18.

not satisfied and went on to regional council, which resulted in changes to when the degree of

environmental sensitivity of a property would be determined in the process.[95] Thus, as Gosselin

writes, despite the ESPA policies being "a pioneering effort," "Astonishingly, no objections were

received from the hundreds of landowners involved."[96] It would take 20 years for the provincial

government to require similar protections.[97] In many ways, then, the Region of Waterloo's

willingness to break new ground in protection of privately owned rural lands began and

continued with ESPAs.

Third, the ROPP provided a rough sketching of a central transit corridor through the

region. The transit corridor was largely conceptual at this stage, roughly outlined on the

transportation map with a thick orange arrow, and ran from the north end of the City of

Waterloo, through Kitchener, and to the south end of Cambridge through what had recently been

Preston and Galt.[98] This conceptual arrow actually predated regional government, appearing in a

map prepared by the Waterloo County Area Planning Board for the Waterloo South-Wellington

Area Study in 1972.[99] This arrow plays a minor role in the 1976 ROPP; it stands without

comment in the chapter on transportation in which it appears, and the chapter focuses its

comments on transit on the fact that transit is still being run, and will be for some time, by the

area municipalities. Yet there it sits, running right along what another ROPP map identifies as

Settlement Pattern Policy Area C: a snake running through the three cities along a historic

[95] Ibid., 16.8.

[96] Gosselin, "Natural Area Policies, Regional Municipality of Waterloo, 1973 to 2001 and beyond," 96.

[97] Ibid.

[98] Regional Municipality of Waterloo, "Bylaw Number 75-75: A by-Law to Adopt the Regional Official

Policies Plan for the Waterloo Planning Area," chap. 15.

[99] Waterloo County Area Planning Board, *A Strategy for Growth*.

transportation route, within which "concentrations of higher density residential uses and higher intensity commercial, industrial, office, institutional and public uses may be located, and where a public transit system may be provided by the region."[100] The transit corridor overlays the area that the first Regional Official Policies Plan designates as for "high intensity uses" along a "central north-south transportation corridor."[101]

This "symbolic line" would persist in subsequent version of the Regional Official Policies Plan, up until the Region amended its official plan in 2007 to replace that symbolic line with a "defined boundary" as part of its serious planning to build a rapid transit system through the corridor,[102] along which the Region was determined to encourage intensification. This lone arrow, and the policy area only tenuously connected to it in the 1976 plan, would return to animate a central vision, and significant battle, of the next century.

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[100] Regional Municipality of Waterloo, "Bylaw Number 75-75: A by-Law to Adopt the Regional Official Policies Plan for the Waterloo Planning Area," 7.2.

[101] Ibid., 7.1.

[102] Region of Waterloo, "Regional Official Policies Plan Amendment No. 26: Introduction of New Transit and Rapid Transit Policies and Mapping," April 2007, 24, Internet Archive, https://web.archive.org/web/20150714221158/http://www.regionofwaterloo.ca/en/regionalGovernment/resources/Ropp_amendment_26.pdf.
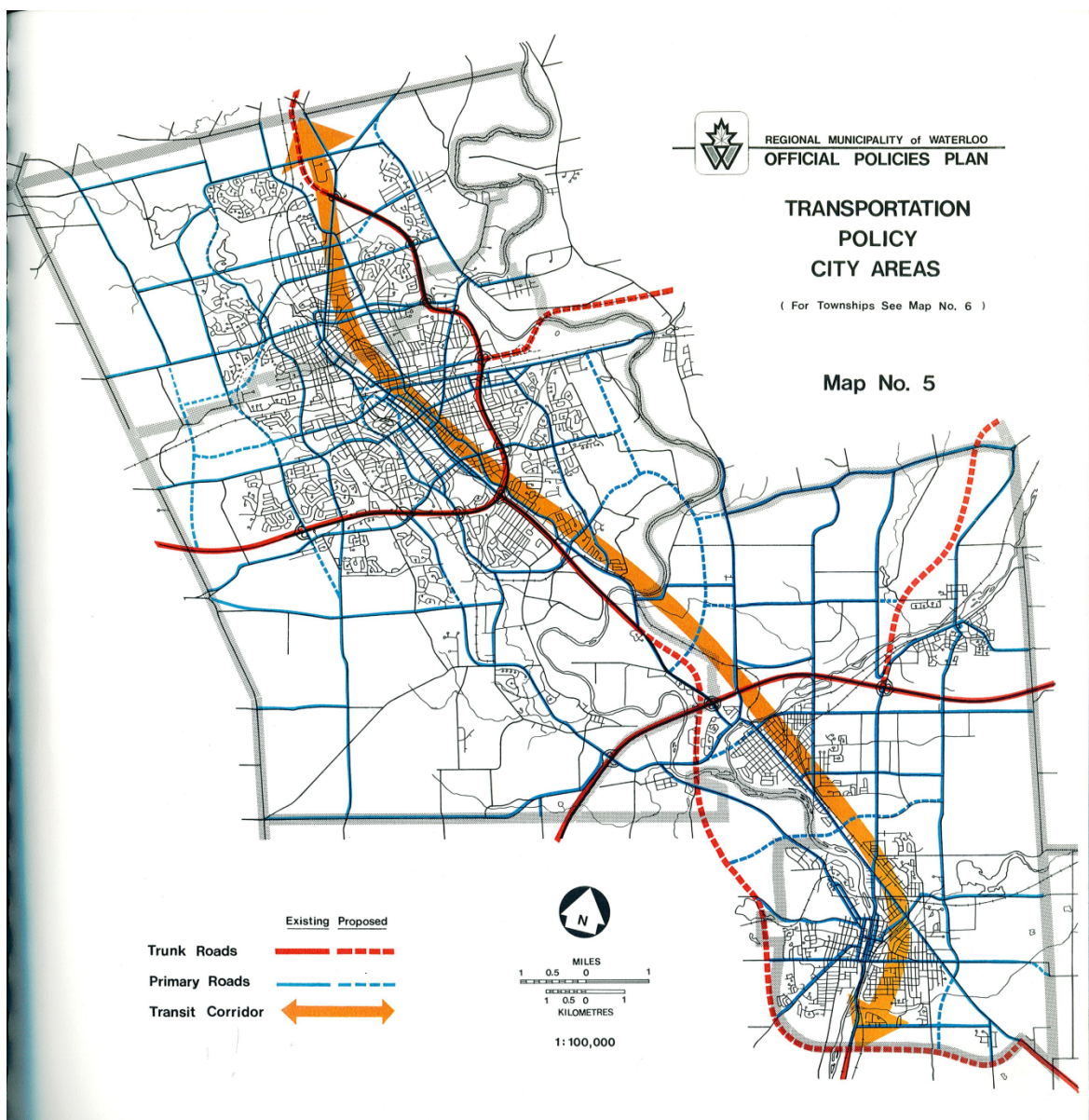
Figure 3: Map No. 5 of the 1976 Regional Official Policies Plan, showing an early conceptual arrow marking a future transit corridor. Regional Municipality of Waterloo. Source: "Bylaw Number 75-75: A by-Law to Adopt the Regional Official Policies Plan for the Waterloo Planning Area," December 7, 1976. ROW 3-6/2. Region of Waterloo Archives. Copyright: Region of Waterloo Archives. Used with permission.

Fourth, and perhaps most commonly under-recognized, was the ROPP's restrictions on

farmland severances. The 1976 ROPP created limits on the creation of farm-related and non-

farm related residential lots in rural areas, in an effort to limit "strip development" of residences

on public roads.[103] While the Region had initially passed an amendment to the ROPP in 1979

that would allow for severance of a surplus farmhouse[104] if two farm lots were being merged,[105]

several area municipalities asked the province not to approve it, and a process engaging the area

municipalities and local farm groups was initiated to deal more comprehensively with residential

severance issues.[106] Despite some controversy,[107] an eventual arrangement was found, and in

November of 1981, the province approved ROPP Amendment Number Three, which would

further limit non-farm residential severances from farm lots, and remove special permissions to

sever additional residential lots on farms to house retiring farmers.[108] Waterloo Region became

one of the first municipalities in Ontario to end retirement severances.[109] Crucially, the revisions

also transformed the section of the ROPP on creation of farm-related residential units into a

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[103] Regional Municipality of Waterloo, "Bylaw Number 75-75: A by-Law to Adopt the Regional Official Policies Plan for the Waterloo Planning Area," 7.3.

[104] This amendment was sparked largely by a specific landowner application, as the Land Division Committee had rejected the application to sever a non-farm residential lot upon the merger of two farms. The story had gotten some attention in the local daily paper. Region of Waterloo, "Regional Official Policies Plan Amendment Number Two: Appendix," n.d., 3-6/3, Region of Waterloo Archives, accessed April 25, 2016.

[105] Regional Municipality of Waterloo, "The Regional Official Policies Plan Amendment Number Two," July 19, 1979, 3-6/3, Region of Waterloo Archives.

[106] Bill Thomson, "Proposed Changes to the Regional Official Policies Plan - Chapter 7, Settlement Patterns: A Choice of Living Styles," Staff report to Planning and Development Committee (Region of Waterloo, September 9, 1980), 1, 3-6/1/2, Region of Waterloo Archives.

[107] Ken Seiling, interview by author, Kitchener, ON.

[108] Regional Municipality of Waterloo, "The Regional Official Policies Plan Amendment Number Three," November 10, 1981, 3-6/3, Region of Waterloo Archives.

[109] Ken Seiling, interview by author, Kitchener, ON.

section on the creation of farms. After 1981, farms created by severance would have to have a minimum lot size of 35 hectares.[110] These minimum lot restrictions, too, were not common in other parts of Ontario.[111] These changes would come with some controversy,[112] but they would happen.

The combined effect of the initial farm severance policies and the very early amendments to the ROPP was to mostly limit strip development. The incentives for a severance were at one time substantial, as the value of a new lot could be almost the value of the entire farm.[113] Small severances, usually along major roads, take land away from the farmable area on an agricultural lot, and most importantly create conflicts between urban and agricultural uses,[114] which encourages farming "to diminish in intensity" next to residences.[115] As Bunting and Filion note, the result of "strict planning measures" in Waterloo Region has led to "sharply defined boundaries between the built-up urban territory and surrounding rural land."[116] As Mark Reusser of the Waterloo Federation of Agriculture says,

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[110] Regional Municipality of Waterloo, "The Regional Official Policies Plan Amendment Number Three."

[111] Mark Reusser, interview by author, Wilmot, ON, April 2, 2016.

[112] Thomson, "Proposed Changes to the Regional Official Policies Plan - Chapter 7, Settlement Patterns: A Choice of Living Styles."

[113] Mark Reusser, interview by author, Wilmot, ON.

[114] As Mark Reusser tells me, "You know, somebody doesn't like you spreading manure on Sunday, and they don't want you cultivating the fields at 12 o'clock at night…. The list is endless. It goes on and on and on." Ibid.

[115] Ibid.

[116] Pierre Filion and Trudi E. Bunting, "The Dispersed City," in *The Dynamics of the Dispersed City: Geographic and Planning Perspectives on Waterloo Region*, Department of Geography Publication Series ; No. 47 (Waterloo, Ont: Dept. of Geography, University of Waterloo, 1996), 31.

you know you're crossing a line…. Why do you know? Because there's no gradient, in terms of urban development. It's developed on this side. On this side it's farmland…. You drive out of anywhere, the rest of Southern Ontario, you're in a developed subdivision, and then you're in a little less developed area, and then you've got strip development, and then you've got scattered development. And then finally at some point, well, I think I'm in the country. That is different than Waterloo Region.[117]

Thus these early severance policies would be significant in maintaining viable agriculture near urban development in Waterloo Region, and keeping a definitive split between the urban and rural areas, in a way that has not happened in most other parts of Ontario.[118]

These early policies around settlement patterns, environmental protection, transit, and farm severances would set the stage for future planning in the region. Yet the 1976 ROPP was perhaps even more significant as one of the early processes by which the Region of Waterloo found its feet, and by which the area municipalities and the regional municipality negotiated their relationship to each other. The relationship between the area's eight municipalities had hardly been settled; such relationships would continue to be renegotiated. In the 1970s as before regional government, the various municipalities fought and collaborated over regional planning issues. What had changed was that a new regional government, representing both urban and regional concerns, finally had jurisdiction to create and implement a truly regional plan.

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[117] Mark Reusser, interview by author, Wilmot, ON.

[118] Notably, a 1991 report from the Region notes that the Region's approach to agricultural policies in the ROPP on paper seemed more permissive than those in other communities' regional official plans. It finds, however, that "it appears the policies have been implemented and interpreted to their full capacity of preserving farmland," and as a result, "the ROPP would have to be considered, in general terms, more restrictive as [sic] most of the other Regional Plans, particularly regarding rural severances." Kevin Plautz, "Other Regional Official Policies Plans: Policy Directions and Innovations," R.O.P.P. Report (Region of Waterloo, December 12, 1991), 22, 64-3/1/4, Region of Waterloo Archives.

Municipal government actors would continue to sort through older problems in this changed context.

Changing Planning, Changing Regional Government

The next 15 years would be comparatively quiet. As David Siegel notes, "The history of municipal reform in Ontario is a combination of relatively short periods of frantic, politically contentious activity punctuated by lengthy periods of quietude and incremental change."[119] Following the massive changes of regional governments, municipal reorganization was settling down across Ontario,[120] and Waterloo Region was no exception. Despite a few tweaks to the number of seats and municipalities they would represent, and in the precise method through which the local tiers would select their regional representatives,[121] regional council maintained the same basic arrangement of representation throughout the 1980s and well into the 1990s.[122]

The same was true on the regional planning file. Provincially, the period between the mid-1970s and the early 2000s comprises what Richard White describes as "The Age of Non-Planning" in his study of the Toronto metropolitan region.[123] He notes that the period showed a strengthened "belief that local people, or local interests, have the right to determine what is best for a given locality," and associates its rise with a decline in the authority wielded by professions, and with the increase of contempt for "government intervention."[124] The provincial

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[119] Siegel, "Municipal Reform in Ontario: Revolutionary Evolution," 127.

[120] Ibid.

[121] Terrence J. Downey, "Facilitating the Development of Structural Options for Cambridge" (City of Cambridge, October 1998), 6–7.

[122] Downey, "Governance in the Regional Municipality of Waterloo," 5.

[123] White, *The Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe in Historical Perspective*, 32.

[124] Ibid., 34.

government had largely removed itself from the broader regional planning initiatives to which it was so enthusiastically committed in the late 1960s.

Regional planning was also fairly quiet within Waterloo Region. Although the 1976 ROPP had been updated in the 1980s to comply with a new requirement in the Planning Act that plans be reviewed every five years, "the basic policies had not undergone major changes."[125] There were, of course, some controversies that arose in regional planning. An attempt to add additional Environmentally Sensitive Policy Areas to the ROPP in the late 1980s and early 1990s, for example, met with considerable landowner objections.[126] Yet the broad framework of regional planning would remain fairly consistent in this period. This period of quiet coincided with changes to how planning was perceived in Ontario and across the globe. As Richard White writes, the authority wielded by planners had decreased, and "By the late 1970s, any large-scale solution proposed by professional planners … would be immediately challenged and most likely dismissed."[127] Thus both regional planning and regional government were fairly consistent and relatively quiet in this period.

The 1990s decidedly marked the end of the quietude Siegel describes. Attention to planning and municipal government structure would intensify in the 1990s. Much of this dramatic change in context can be attributed once again to the provincial government. As suggested by the previous chapter, the provincial government is necessarily a major driver of

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[125] Carlton Stewart, "Managing Growth: A Regional Planning Perspective," in *The Dynamics of the Dispersed City: Geographic and Planning Perspectives on Waterloo Region*, ed. Trudi E. Bunting, Kevin Curtis, and Pierre Filion, Department of Geography Publication Series ; No. 47 (Waterloo, Ont: Dept. of Geography, University of Waterloo, 1996), 121.

[126] Gosselin, "Natural Area Policies, Regional Municipality of Waterloo, 1973 to 2001 and beyond," 96.

[127] White, *The Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe in Historical Perspective*, 32.

policy, persistence, and change in any Ontario municipal context, and this is particularly true on planning matters. This was especially the case with the new Progressive Conservative government of Premier Mike Harris in 1995, along with what he termed his Common Sense Revolution. From the mid-1990s, significant changes would come to both planning and regional government in Waterloo Region.

Planning Changes

In the middle of the 1990s, the Region conducted an in-depth review of the policies, goals, and structure of the Official Plan.[128] As part of this process, the plan was "updated to address all Provincial policies issues."[129] Significantly, the new ROPP would include "detailed limits to the urban areas,"[130] and the mapping of settlement areas, which had previously been in the form of those conceptual blobs, would now be specified and prescribed in detail in the regional plan.[131] In the process of this specification, a number of areas that had previously been designated for urban expansion were actually de-designated, and the lands planned for urban expansion would be reduced in north Cambridge and around a number of the rural settlements.[132]

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[128] See Stewart, "Managing Growth: A Regional Planning Perspective"; Plautz, "Other Regional Official Policies Plans: Policy Directions and Innovations."

[129] Policy and Priorities Committee, "A Plan for Municipal Services in the Region of Waterloo: A Staff Report Prepared by the Region's Policy & Priorities Committee for Input into the Working Group on Local Government Reform" (Region of Waterloo, March 13, 1996), 41.

[130] Stewart, "Managing Growth: A Regional Planning Perspective," 131.

[131] Kevin Eby, interview by author, Waterloo, ON.

[132] Of the 1990s de-designation, former regional planner Kevin Eby says, "Stunningly, nobody challenged us on anything. Which would never happen today." Ibid.

Infrastructure staging plans were included for the first time, and additional requirements included higher minimum farm lot sizes and policies for higher density land uses in each of the municipalities.[133] The approach to the Environmentally Sensitive Policy Areas was shifted from identifying individual sensitive areas to identifying a "Natural Habitat Network,"[134] and required the area municipalities to providing zoning for ESPA protection, which had previously been exclusively a designation of the Region.[135][136]

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[133] Stewart, "Managing Growth: A Regional Planning Perspective," 131–32.

[134] Gosselin, "Natural Area Policies, Regional Municipality of Waterloo, 1973 to 2001 and beyond," 97.

[135] Ouellet, "Environmentally Sensitive Policy Areas as a Tool for Environmental Protection," 337.

[136] Crucially, the first version of the new ROPP, described by Stewart, was passed by regional council in October of 1994. Region of Waterloo, "Regional Official Policies Plan: Planning for a Sustainable Community," October 27, 1994, 64-3/1/11, Region of Waterloo Archives. It was never approved by the ministry. In the intervening time, the province created the Comprehensive Set of Provincial Policy Statements (CSPS), and the Region opted to repeal and re-pass the 1994 version so that it would be eligible to conform to the Act. Region of Waterloo, "Regional Municipality of Waterloo Planning and Culture Committee," February 14, 1995, Council Indexing Package, February 14, 1995, Region of Waterloo Archives. The Region repealed and adopted the 1994 plan on May 11, 1995. K.D. Eby, "Proposed Regional Official Policies Plan Modifications to Be Presented at the August 25, 1995 Public Meeting," Planning and Culture Committee (Region of Waterloo, August 15, 1995), Council Indexing Package August 24, 1995, Region of Waterloo Archives. Changes were required after this passage to actually assure conformity with the new provincial rules. The biggest changes required were to the "Natural Heritage Policies," as the province put it, and considerable work between the Region and the area municipalities was required to determine which level of government would act to conform to which parts of the new provincial policy. Ibid. The new provincial policies also necessitated creation of two new categories of protected lands: Environmental Preservation Areas and Regionally Significant Corridors. Ibid., 3. Thus the environmental policies, in particular, involved significant changes between the 1994 and 1995 versions.

These changes were certainly significant, and mark an incremental step between the more general policies of the 1970s and the smart growth policies of the 2000s, particularly with respect to more defined urban envelopes and system oriented environmental protection. Yet the most prevalent assumption, from the postwar period before even regional government, continued. As in the 1976 official plan, the new official plan would presume that there would be growth, albeit much less than had been predicted in the 1970s. As Carlton Stewart, planner and member of the ROPP Review Team for the 1990s revisions, would write, "the operating premise was that the role of policies was not to control but 'manage' growth and development, thereby emphasizing where, rather than if, growth will occur."[137] Even as the policies of the ROPP were changed, managing growth would continue to be the central focus of the regional planning story.

At the same time, changes to the legal framework under which the Region would plan were happening, as well. In the 1990s, the province made formal changes to the Region's role in planning.[138] The Region had previously been involved in development approvals to [1] comment on the protection of its own corporate interests, [2] ensure that proposals comply with the Regional Official Policies Plan, and [3] serve as the approval authority for "official plans, official plan amendments, plans of subdivision, plans of condominium, and part-lot control exemption by-laws."[139][140] The region's role as approval authority for a number of these items

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[137] Stewart, "Managing Growth: A Regional Planning Perspective," 114.

[138] Kevin Eby, interview by author, Waterloo, ON.

[139] Kevin Curtis and Cushla Matthews, "New Regional Official Plan Update," Planning, Housing and Community Services (Region of Waterloo, January 8, 2008), 2, http://www.regionofwaterloo.ca/en/regionalGovernment/resources/P-08-003.pdf.

[140] The Region of Waterloo was the first of the regional governments to be given responsibility as the approval authority for all of these functions by the province in the 1970s. Policy and Priorities Committee, "A Plan

was delegated to the planning commissioner[141] as "an administrative matter,"[142] and was modified in the 1990s. The government gave the Region the power to delegate its authority on subdivision, condominiums, and part-lot control exemptions to the local tier municipalities,[143] though this change was only eventually made for the City of Kitchener.[144] A fourth responsibility was added, based on a memorandum of understanding in 1996 to allow the Region to take over responsibility for commenting on behalf of provincial ministries[145] on development approvals.[146] Despite the administrative focus of these changes to the Region's role, many of them further shifted decisions to local levels of government that had a better sense of the "local context."[147]

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for Municipal Services in the Region of Waterloo: A Staff Report Prepared by the Region's Policy & Priorities Committee for Input into the Working Group on Local Government Reform," 39.

[141] W. H. Palmer, "Planning Administration and Development Control in the Region of Waterloo," Land use planning series, Waterloo Region Review Commission, (September 1978), 398–400.

[142] Kevin Eby, interview by author, Waterloo, ON.

[143] Policy and Priorities Committee, "A Plan for Municipal Services in the Region of Waterloo: A Staff Report Prepared by the Region's Policy & Priorities Committee for Input into the Working Group on Local Government Reform," 39.

[144] Curtis and Matthews, "New Regional Official Plan Update," 2.

[145] This memorandum delegated authority to provide "development application review comments on behalf of the Ministry of the Environment, the Ministry of Agriculture and Food, the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, the Ministry of Culture, and the Ministry of Natural Resources." Ibid.

[146] Ibid.; White, *The Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe in Historical Perspective*, 39; Kevin Eby, interview by author, Waterloo, ON.

[147] Kevin Eby, interview by author, Waterloo, ON.

Thus changes were happening to how regional planning was done in Waterloo Region in the 1990s, both with respect to policies and with respect to which level of government would be responsible for what.

Regional Reform

Yet the most important story of the 1990s was about the changes that would be made to the relationships between governments that had been established 20 years earlier. It was a fractious time in the Region. Premier Mike Harris's ideological drive for less government, more efficiency, and lower taxes was the basis for a series of amalgamations and related restructurings across Ontario.[148] His reforms would cut the number of municipalities in Ontario nearly in half.[149]

Even before the fractious renegotiation of regional relationships that would emerge in the Harris years, local efforts to revise regional relationships had begun in Waterloo Region. Former municipal affairs minister John Sweeney was appointed as chair of the Waterloo Region Review in September of 1994,[150] months before the Harris government would come to power. After Harris's election, and in a changed political context, the review panel took it upon itself to extend its mandate, and recommend an amalgamated one-tier government for Waterloo Region.[151] This was not well received. Sweeney would quit as chair following delivery of the report, citing

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[148] Siegel, "Municipal Reform in Ontario: Revolutionary Evolution," 128.

[149] Ibid., 129.

[150] John Roe, "Double Duty : John Sweeney Insists He's up to the Task of Handling Region, School Board Reviews," *Kitchener-Waterloo Record*, February 27, 1995, Final edition, sec. Local.

[151] John Sweeney, "Governance" (Waterloo Region Review, December 1995).

obstructionism and resistance to change from local officials.[152] However, even by that time, the incoming storm was clearly visible. As a news article paraphrased, "The political climate has changed radically since the review was launched, Sweeney said, and the message from Queen's Park is clear: that change is coming, and that the province is keen to dramatically reduce the number of councils and municipal politicians in the province."[153]

The "veiled threat" that the province would "step in if locals can't streamline themselves to achieve savings"[154] hung over the excited, and at times fierce, debates over regional reform in the coming years. Local officials across the Region had radically different views of what should change, and these positions were different at different times. Some, including a majority of the area municipal council at the City of Kitchener, supported amalgamation into a single-tier megacity.[155] On the other end of the spectrum, some felt that regional government was the problem. At various points in the five-year process, participants proposed arrangements that would significantly weaken it, or eliminate it altogether. Proposals came from some at the local tiers in Waterloo and Cambridge for the Region to become a service board through which the

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[152] Bob Burtt and Catherine Thompson, "Sweeney Quits Review of Region," *Kitchener-Waterloo Record*, November 11, 1995, Final edition, sec. Front.

[153] Ibid.

[154] Brian Caldwell, "Region Moves Closer to Reform; Seven Mayors and Regional Chairman Agree on Need to Revamp Local Government," *Kitchener-Waterloo Record*, April 9, 1999, Final edition, sec. Front.

[155] Brian Caldwell, "Kitchener Backtracks on Reform Consensus," *Kitchener-Waterloo Record*, June 27, 2000, Final edition, sec. Front.

local-tier governments would contract services.[156] Others, continuing debates from nearly two decades earlier, wanted Cambridge to secede from the Region.[157]

There were also those who stood between strong advocates of a single-tier regional amalgamation and advocates of more or complete area municipal autonomy. These people might have had general leanings toward one- or two-tier systems, but they could agree to a two-tier rationalization that preserved the governments in question while reducing the number of local councillors at all levels, and transferring some local services to the regional government.[158] A proposal based on this middle ground would get the farthest, and form the basis of the changes that would come.

In April of 1999, the regional chair and the seven mayors would agree on a set of proposals for reform, and recommended a set of specific changes based on this approach.[159] Yet agreement among the mayors did not mean their area municipal councils agreed, nor that regional council would agree.

A number of major changes would take place as a result of this this protracted and conflictual process. Some of them were jurisdictional, while others were representational. Jurisdictionally, an early decision to transfer responsibility for garbage collection and transit to

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[156] Brian Turnbull and Tom Stockie, "Down to Earth: A Model for Municipal Government in Waterloo Region," November 21, 1995; Doug Craig, "The Tri-City Model of Governance for Waterloo Region," June 1997.

[157] Liz Monteiro, "Stepping Down, but Not Ready to Leave; After 12 Years as Cambridge Mayor, Brewer to Run for Regional Council," *Kitchener-Waterloo Record*, June 23, 2000, First edition, sec. Front.

[158] Joel Rubinoff, "Region Reform Falls Apart; Councillors Agree to Defer All Talks until after November Elections," *Kitchener-Waterloo Record*, July 13, 2000, Final edition, sec. Local.

[159] Jane Brewer et al., "Regional Reform in Waterloo Region," April 14, 1999.

the Region from the area municipalities gained traction and was passed.[160] Further efforts at reform, which would have transferred responsibility for water and sewer services to the Region and provided centralized municipal administrative services, were narrowly defeated at regional council[161] by those who wanted amalgamation into a single-tier region.[162]

From a planning standpoint, the most significant service change that did occur was the Region's assumption of transit services in 2000. In the new century, a truly regional transit service would facilitate the creation of a north/south public transit link between Cambridge and the other urban municipalities,[163] which had been a long-term local concern,[164] and would allow transit planning and implementation to take place at a regional scale.

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[160] Catherine Thompson, "Region Votes to Reinvent Itself; Council to Be Separate from Municipalities," *Kitchener-Waterloo Record*, June 24, 1999, Final edition, sec. Front.

[161] Changes to local and regional jurisdiction required a "triple majority." Rubinoff, "Region Reform Falls Apart; Councillors Agree to Defer All Talks until after November Elections." For a triple majority, a majority of regional council must vote in favour of the proposal, along with a majority of the seven local-tier councils representing a majority of the region's population. Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, "Section 2: An Overview of Local Government," *Government of Ontario*, July 25, 2011, http://www.mah.gov.on.ca/Page8391.aspx. Five municipalities had already approved the additional changes (only Kitchener and Woolwich did not approve them), but the regional council vote was lost 11 to 10. Rubinoff, "Region Reform Falls Apart; Councillors Agree to Defer All Talks until after November Elections."

[162] Rubinoff, "Region Reform Falls Apart; Councillors Agree to Defer All Talks until after November Elections."

[163] Christian Aagaard, "Transit Link Dissolves the 'Wall,'" *Kitchener-Waterloo Record*, September 6, 2000, Final edition, sec. Local.

[164] Ken Seiling, interview by author, Kitchener, ON.

To some extent, however, changes that did not occur were important to the regional planning landscape, as well. The deal that would have moved water and sewer services to the regional level fell apart at the eleventh hour,[165] meaning area municipalities would maintain jurisdiction over water delivery and local sewers, despite the fact that the Region provides the water and deals with the eventual waste water. While listing a variety of concerns about transferring these services to the Region, the City of Waterloo named one particularly attuned to the growth management challenges that have so often animated debates over municipal jurisdictions in the area. They were concerned about development control. As part of its own Growth Management Strategy, the City had "an annual Staging of Development Plan" for "the achievement of key planning goals and for the effective and efficient use of human and financial resources. Having control over the extension of water and wastewater services is critical for the City to implement the Growth Management Strategy and to effectively stage development."[166] The City of Waterloo was not the only municipality that was critical of the proposal based on loss of "control over development."[167] The recommendation of the Working Group on Local Government Reform for Waterloo to regionalize water and waste water was not unanimous, with one opposed, and the only point of concern listed was "that this recommendation might detract

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[165] Rubinoff, "Region Reform Falls Apart; Councillors Agree to Defer All Talks until after November Elections."

[166] T.B. Stockie, "The City of Waterloo Response to the Working Group on Local Government Reform for Waterloo Region" (City of Waterloo, August 20, 1996), 7.

[167] Harry Kitchen, "Responsibility for Services in the Region of Waterloo," Final report, The Working Group on Local Government Reform (Regional Municipality of Waterloo, June 12, 1996), 28.

from the ability of local municipalities to control development with autonomy."[168] As regional

councillor Sean Strickland says, "the municipalities said, well, if we give up the distribution, we

give up that much more control on where we want to put our subdivisions."[169]

Harry Kitchen, in his final report on services to the Working Group on Local Government

Reform, argued that these problems had not been seen in other region-level water and

wastewater systems, and that the challenge was really about making sure the municipalities had

adequate long-range infrastructure planning.[170] In the end, however, the area municipalities

would not give up control over the pipes; given the importance of sewer and water servicing in

the expansion of urban lands, the area municipalities retained a practical element of jurisdiction

over where growth would happen.

Seen together, the result was that the Region of Waterloo would assume transit services,

providing integrated transit planning across the region, at the same time as the area

municipalities were retaining a visibly important level of involvement in new subdivision

planning through infrastructure servicing. These jurisdictional changes were very much about

planning.

Beyond jurisdiction, a number of representational changes would occur at regional

council, and two would be particularly crucial for smart growth in the next decade. First, in 1997,

the regional chair was elected for the first time, rather than being appointed by election by

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[168] David Leis, "The Working Group on Local Government Reform for Waterloo Region - Report" (Region of Waterloo, June 27, 1996), 6.

[169] Sean Strickland, interview by author, Kitchener, ON, January 22, 2016.

[170] Kitchen, "Responsibility for Services in the Region of Waterloo," 28.

regional council.[171] Long-time chair Ken Seiling would continue in the role he held as an

appointee since 1985, but the change would solidify the legitimacy of the regional chair position

and strengthen the already considerable influence wielded by a political giant in the area.[172]

Second, beginning in 2000, councillors would be selected by very different means. There

had already been some tweaks to the number of councillors representing the area municipalities

and the method through which they were selected,[173] but the 2000 changes would be substantive,

and unprecedented in Waterloo's regional government system. While the seven mayors and the

now elected regional chair would continue to sit on regional council, the remaining members

would be elected directly by voters in elections conducted at-large across the respective area

municipality in each of the three cities. Under this "separated councils" arrangement and for the

first time, there would be regional councillors who would no longer sit on their area municipal

councils.[174] A majority of regional councillors would now represent their areas, not their

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[171] Christian Aagaard, "Seiling Steam-Rolls to Win as Regional Chairman," *Kitchener-Waterloo Record*, November 11, 1997, Final edition, sec. Municipal election '97.

[172] See Christian Aagaard, "Chairman Ken Seiling: Persuader Fixed on Reform," *Kitchener-Waterloo Record*, November 18, 1998, Final edition, sec. Front.

[173] Between the late 1970s and 1995, all of the area municipalities except Kitchener had begun to elect regional councillors by the double-direct system originally used only by Wilmot, as was recommended by the Palmer Commission in 1979. The City of Waterloo had been given an additional member in 1986, bringing the total number of regional councillors, including the appointed chair, to 26. Downey, "Governance in the Regional Municipality of Waterloo," 8. When the provincial legislative changes to elect the regional chair went through, the province also reduced the number of regional councillors from 26 to 22. Greg Crone, "Law Lets Voters Pick Regional Chairman," *Kitchener-Waterloo Record*, June 13, 1997, Final edition, sec. Local. This numerical arrangement would only last one election.

[174] Thompson, "Region Votes to Reinvent Itself; Council to Be Separate from Municipalities."

municipal corporations, as the seven mayors would be the only regional councillors who would

also sit at the local level. While the move remained controversial, supporters highlighted that

removing local-tier responsibilities would mean that those councillors would have a more

regionally-oriented perspective,[175] and would have more time to consider regional issues. There

had been concerns that full involvement in the "complex issues" at two levels was becoming

increasingly difficult for the councillors who served on both.[176]

Direct election of the regional chair and direct election of regional, but not area

municipal, councillors would mean that most of regional council would have independent

legitimacy firmly placed in the regional level of government. These moves away from the

previous federation approach described by Downey, combined with the jurisdictional changes of

the 1990s, would have significant consequences for planning politics in the following decades.

Waterloo Region is the only regional municipality in Ontario with both directly elected

councillors and a directly elected regional chair.[177]

The wounds of this period should not be underestimated. Disputes between those

advocating total amalgamation, a revised two-tier system, or the dismantling of the region or

secession of Cambridge left lasting scars for those who had lived through them. Yet, by the early

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[175] Jeff Outhit, "New Regional Councillors Argue for Restoring Old Links with Cities," *Kitchener-Waterloo Record*, November 12, 2003, Final edition, sec. Local.

[176] Sweeney, "Governance," 23.

[177] Niagara and Waterloo both directly elect councillors, but Niagara still appoints its regional chair through election by its regional council. Niagara Region, "Regional Chair - Niagara Region, Ontario," accessed July 2, 2016, https://www.niagararegion.ca/government/council/regional-chair.aspx; Robert J. Williams, "Report for Durham Regional Council Composition Review Committee" (Durham Region, September 2015), 12, https://www.durham.ca/council/RCCRC/RCCRC_WilliamsReport.pdf.

2000s, it was clear to most participants that regional reform was largely dead. The last unsuccessful round of attempted municipal reform at the local level was in July of 2000; future talks were delayed until after the November 2000 municipal election.[178] While regional council voted to ask the province for a facilitator in February of 2001,[179] no facilitator was forthcoming, and by May, major advocates on opposing sides of the reform issue agreed that substantial change in the next few years was unlikely.[180] With the exception of a 2005 request for amalgamation discussions from the City of Kitchener,[181] there seemed to be little desire to prolong painful discussion in the absence of real signs that change would be forthcoming.

There are competing explanations for why the provincial government did not force single-tier amalgamation on Waterloo Region. As David Siegel notes, after the amalgamations that were effective on January 1, 2000, "the Conservative government seemed to lose its zeal for amalgamation," as it started to face the unpopularity of its amalgamations with a resignation of one of its own caucus members in Hamilton-Wentworth.[182] Yet the Region of Waterloo had been on the initial list for amalgamation at the start of 2000.[183] In Waterloo Region itself, there is broad speculation that Elizabeth Witmer, a high-profile cabinet minister representing the riding

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[178] Rubinoff, "Region Reform Falls Apart; Councillors Agree to Defer All Talks until after November Elections."

[179] Mirko Petricevic, "Region to Ask for Facilitator," *Kitchener-Waterloo Record*, February 15, 2001, Final edition, sec. Local.

[180] Rose Simone, "Put Amalgamation to Rest, Craig Says; But Cambridge Will Conduct $15,000 Poll," *Kitchener-Waterloo Record*, May 26, 2001, Final edition, sec. Local.

[181] Terry Pender, "City Bids to Amalgamate; Kitchener Council Votes to Resume Negotiations on Region-Wide Reform," *Kitchener-Waterloo Record*, October 4, 2005, Final edition, sec. Front.

[182] Siegel, "Municipal Reform in Ontario: Revolutionary Evolution," 134.

[183] Carl Zehr, interview by author, Kitchener, ON, December 7, 2015.

of Kitchener-Waterloo, protected the area from amalgamation behind the scenes. A more

complex version of the story relies on the PC government's fear of losing seats in the next

election. As former Kitchener mayor Carl Zehr explains,

> we got pulled off the list at the 11th and a half hour. And my observation of why that
> happened, and you'll never find this in documentation, is that the four ridings were
> held by the PCs. And then there was essentially a pact: okay, we're not going to push
> for this if there's a danger of us losing. And I think it was Gerry Martiniuk who was
> the MPP in Cambridge at the time. Liz Witmer was a cabinet minister. He and they
> were concerned that they'd lose Cambridge, at least, if we stayed on that list.[184]

So it seems that the provincial government lost its nerve to force amalgamation in Waterloo

Region, and thus the partial reforms passed locally in the late 1990s, under the threat of unilateral

provincial action, would stand.

Some change had come, but not nearly as much as had been expected. As a result, the

area municipal governments retained significant strength, but the Region would emerge stronger

than it had been. The Region embarked on the 21st century with a newfound control over transit,

a newfound independence with an elected chair and directly elected regional councillors, and a

newfound sense that they were stuck with two-tier regional government more or less in its

current form.

Conclusion

The new regional government required new regional relationships, and the major

processes through which these have been negotiated have been, at their core, about planning.

Through early negotiations, and particularly through the creation of the Regional Official

Policies Plan, policies would be set that would have lasting effects on future planning in the

region. Those policies were noticeably developed in the 1990s, and changes were made to the

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[184] Ibid.

provincial planning landscape at the same time. But the changes made to regional government in the 1990s would have a profound effect on the planning yet to come. Waterloo Region would enter the new century with a strengthened regional government and persistent area municipal governments. The stage was set for Waterloo Region's leadership on smart growth, both at home and at the provincial level.

Chapter 5: Smart Growth in a Two-Tiered Region

Introduction

The beginning of the 21st century was, in many ways, a new beginning for the Region of Waterloo. The shape of local government had been mostly settled, at least for the moment. New independence and directly elected leadership from the chair at regional council coincided with the growing popularity of smart growth approaches. The convergence of the two meant concerted work toward smart growth was possible.

In this chapter, I show how Waterloo Region's two-tier local government system facilitated a commitment to smart growth policies and, in turn, how this commitment meant the Region was able to provide leadership on provincial smart growth initiatives. I begin by describing how smart growth came to Ontario, and how the Region of Waterloo's Regional Growth Management Strategy (RGMS) would be developed as a local plan for smart growth before one could fully take shape at the provincial level. I then explain how regional government facilitated the implementation process of the RGMS by requiring broad buy-in across multiple local governments, and how the Region would be in a position to provide leadership at the provincial level for smart growth policies. I finally describe two crucial components of the strategy's implementation, as the Region would continue its commitment to the RGMS by pursuing investment in a light rail transit system to shape land use, and would develop and pass a Regional Official Plan (ROP) to give legal force to the RGMS and the province's smart growth policies.

Smart Growth in Ontario

Looking back, it is clear that the 1995 Regional Official Policies Plan made significant steps in consideration of the environment, and more detailed direction around where growth would happen. What changed by the late 1990s was that smart growth would be on the agenda in Ontario. The real innovation of smart growth was the potential for new political coalitions. As Richard White describes, smart growth

> calls for the use of fairly standard planning and growth management policies to advance the public interest – to encourage, for example, higher residential densities or greater use of public transit – but at the same time accepts that growth is both good and desirable, and that planning controls should not be applied in such a way that they seriously impede growth. It is an attempt to find common ground between planning advocates and growth advocates, or, one might say, put a positive spin on planning for a doubting public.[1]

Smart growth began in the United States, and would be picked up by Ontario's PC government around the turn of the century. White argues that "smart growth was an odd choice for Ontario."[2] He notes that many of the municipalities surrounding Toronto already had policies on paper that fit with the smart growth agenda, particularly around transit, higher densities, and "maintaining urban boundaries."[3]

What smart growth allowed, White says, was an approach that opened up the possibilities of regional planning in the area around Toronto for the more "libertarian" members of the Mike Harris government.[4] When the province initially developed a vision for smart growth, it was unabashedly focused on economic growth. As planner Kevin Curtis, then the Region's Manager of Strategic Policy Development, explains:

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[1] White, *The Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe in Historical Perspective*, 42.

[2] Ibid.

[3] Ibid.

[4] Ibid.

The emphasis at the time, and [that] certainly carried through for the early years, is all economic. It's got very little to do with what most planners would look at and say, well, this is a planning exercise. It had everything to do with the idea that we're competing in a global economy, and the global economy is getting very urban. And our urban places have to look and function in a really good way to be able to compete, both for the investment and for the attraction and retaining of talent that goes along with it. So that was the framework within which the Conservative government certainly came at it.[5]

Within this economic lens, the Harris government set up five smart growth panels covering different parts of the province. The first was in the area that included Toronto,[6] but it would encompass much more than the Greater Toronto Area. The Central Ontario Zone for the Central Ontario Smart Growth Panel would extend as far east as Haliburton, Peterborough, Northumberland, and Niagara, and as far west as Waterloo and Wellington.[7] It was not the first time the provincial government had extended its horizon for Toronto regional planning as far as Waterloo Region; the 1960s Design for Development plan for the Toronto-Centred Region had included the area on its western boundary, as well.[8]

In the years to come, the entire area would come to be known for provincial planning purposes as the Greater Golden Horseshoe.[9] Despite being out on its western boundary, Waterloo Region would be at the centre of smart growth and provincial policies to implement it.

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[5] Kevin Curtis, interview by author, Kitchener, ON, March 22, 2016.

[6] Frances Frisken, *The Public Metropolis: The Political Dynamics of Urban Expansion in the Toronto Region, 1924-2003* (Toronto: Canadian Scholars' Press, 2007), 277.

[7] Ibid.

[8] Government of Ontario, "Design for Development: The Toronto-Centred Region," May 5, 1970, 16.

[9] The Toronto-Centred Region did not include anything that was east of Hamilton on the souths side of Lake Ontario. Government of Ontario, "Design for Development: The Toronto-Centred Region."

Regional Growth Management Strategy

The Region of Waterloo would end up providing solid support for provincial smart growth planning objectives, but it would not wait to follow the province's lead. While the province was talking a lot about smart growth, the Region of Waterloo would develop a plan well before the provincial government did. The Region's explicit commitment to smart growth would begin on April 11, 2001, with a report to regional council from Regional Chair Ken Seiling, in which he recommended the region develop a "plan of 'smart growth'" that would cover the next 20 to 30 years.[10] It was presented to council eight days before the provincial speech from the throne that would list smart growth as one of 21 steps to "to protect the economy and sustain Ontario's quality of life,"[11] and two weeks before the minister would announce coming consultations on how to pursue it.[12] It would be almost a year before the Harris government would create the Central Ontario Smart Growth Panel.[13] The Region of Waterloo was moving to implement smart growth on its own.

While Seiling's report fit conveniently into the developing provincial concern over smart growth focused on economic development, it was characterized by issues that were familiar in

[10] Ken Seiling, "Smart Growth and the Region of Waterloo: Planning for Our Future," Office of the Regional Chair (Region of Waterloo, April 11, 2001), 1.

[11] "Canada. Ontario. Legislative Assembly. Debates and Proceedings. (Hilary M. Weston, Lieutenant Governor)" (2001), http://www.ontla.on.ca/web/house-proceedings/house_detail.do?Date=2001-04-19&Parl=37&Sess=2&locale=en.

[12] "Canada. Ontario. Legislative Assembly. Debates and Proceedings." (2001), http://ontla.on.ca/web/house-proceedings/house_detail.do?Date=2001-04-25&Parl=37&Sess=2&locale=en#P289_35016.

[13] Central Ontario Smart Growth Panel, "Shape the Future: Central Ontario Smart Growth Panel Final Report," April 2003, 1.

the history of planning politics in Waterloo Region, like the protection of agricultural and rural lands and the environment, and directing growth to areas that could be conveniently serviced with the necessary infrastructure. It also proposed that the study pay "particular attention to the lands bounded by Highway 7, the Grand River, and Maple Grove Road,"[14] which Seiling, a former high school history teacher and museum director,[15] noted had been the subject of great development speculation and pressure going back as far as the Fyfe report. He suggested that it was now time for new expansion to be directed toward the east side of the Region's urban areas, near the Region of Waterloo airport, in order to "stop any further development over municipal boundaries to the north and west where intrusions into rural farmlands will be stopped and the areas protected."[16]

All of regional council would support the proposal the day Seiling presented it.[17] Two busy years followed, as regional staff worked to identify broad options, and to turn those into a specific plan. In its final plan, the Regional Growth Management Strategy (RGMS), the Region would settle on an option they described as "Moderate Reurbanization," which was built on six main goals: "Enhancing Our Natural Environment," "Building Vibrant Urban Places,"

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[14] Seiling, "Smart Growth and the Region of Waterloo: Planning for Our Future," 1.

[15] Region of Waterloo, "Meet Ken Seiling," *Region of Waterloo*, accessed July 2, 2016, http://www.regionofwaterloo.ca/en/regionalGovernment/regionalchairandsupportstaff.asp.

[16] Seiling, "Smart Growth and the Region of Waterloo: Planning for Our Future," 3.

[17] Bob Burtt, "North Cambridge, Breslau Targeted for Development; Plan Aims to Reduce Sprawl Elsewhere," *Kitchener-Waterloo Record*, April 12, 2001, Final edition, sec. Local.

"Providing Greater Transportation Choice," "Protecting Our Countryside," "Fostering A Strong Economy," and "Ensuring Overall Coordination and Cooperation."[18]

There were four "key elements" of the strategy, as highlighted by the region in a 2003 summary document. The first was "establishment of a firm countryside line to limit urban sprawl, protect valuable agricultural lands, and maintain our rural character."[19] The Countryside Line would define the edge of urban expansion surrounding existing settlements in Waterloo Region, and give an indication of where future growth would be allowed and desired, and where it would not.

The second key element was "intensification of the CTC [Central Transit Corridor], including implementation of an LRT system, to leverage capital investment and support the revitalization of our downtown core areas."[20] With this element, the Region continued to tie together intensification and revitalization of core areas and the provision of higher-order transit, as it had in the 1976 official plan.

A third key element was "protection and preservation of our environmentally sensitive landscapes, including our moraine areas, which are vital to the integrity of our water resources."[21] Concern over water continued to be a theme from the 1970s, as the area's reliance on groundwater was challenged by enormous growth pressures.[22] The Waterloo Moraine, a crucial component of the water system, sits to the west and north of Kitchener and Waterloo,

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[18] Region of Waterloo, "Planning Our Future: Regional Growth Management Strategy," July 2003, 4, http://www.regionofwaterloo.ca/en/aboutTheEnvironment/resources/RegionalGrowthManagement.pdf.

[19] Ibid., 5.

[20] Ibid.

[21] Ibid.

[22] Palmer, "Report of the Waterloo Region Review Commission," 192–99.

where urban expansion had been happening for decades. Notably, the Environmentally Sensitive Landscape, or ESL, designation was being worked on at the same time as the RGMS,[23] and would designate much larger areas than the Environmentally Sensitive Policy Areas led by the region's first ROPP from 1976.

A fourth key element was the "development of new employment lands in the vicinity of Waterloo Regional Airport to help maintain and enhance the economic prosperity for which our community has long been recognized."[24] This fourth key feature, highlighted by Seiling in his original report,[25] would build on earlier efforts to expand eastward into the former Waterloo Township for industrial purposes, echoing a key feature of the Kitchener 2000 plan and Kitchener's vision to annex much of the area for industrial purposes from four decades earlier.

The RGMS was not without some public opposition, particularly from some in the development industry.[26] While some developers expressed public support for the strategy, particularly those with an interest in development within already urbanized areas,[27] others like the Waterloo Region Homebuilders Association argued that restricting greenfield development would increase the price of single-detached dwellings,[28] as its membership did not believe that a

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[23] Region of Waterloo, "Planning Our Future: Regional Growth Management Strategy," 7.

[24] Ibid., 5.

[25] Seiling, "Smart Growth and the Region of Waterloo: Planning for Our Future," 2.

[26] See, for example, H. (Jack) Hessler, "'Smart Growth' Won't Be Smart without Market Forces," *Kitchener-Waterloo Record*, May 30, 2003, Final edition, sec. Opinion.

[27] Terry Pender, "Building in Suburbs Should Cost More, Region Told," *Kitchener-Waterloo Record*, June 12, 2003, Final edition, sec. Local.

[28] Jeff Outhit, "Livable, Lasting Cities; Politicians, Urban Planners Say Sprawl Must No Longer Go Unchecked," *Kitchener-Waterloo Record*, May 24, 2003, Final edition, sec. Grand Vision.

change in housing preferences would attract new residents to core areas.[29] Some business groups

had also expressed concerns about inadequate industrial land and possible delays in its

servicing.[30]

There were site-specific concerns, as well. Professionals speaking on behalf of people

who owned land that they wanted included in areas slated for urban development made many

submissions to the RGMS process.[31] The approach broadly sketched in Seiling's report, and

enshrined in the RGMS, proposed a shift in development away from the west and north sides and

toward the east, which would affect the broad interests of landowners on the west, north, and east

sides of the urban areas.

Yet broadly, based on significant community consultation, there was substantial support

for the creation of the strategy and the central ideas it espoused.[32] Regional council would

support the vision as well, and voted unanimously in support of the final RGMS.[33] As the

Region's former director of community planning, Kevin Eby, recalls,

> We got a document through council. I remember, after the vote, [CAO] Gerry
> [Thompson] walking over to me and standing in front of me and saying, 'You will

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[29] Jeff Outhit, "Smart Growth Plan Attracts Praise, Criticism," *Kitchener-Waterloo Record*, March 25,

2003, Final edition, sec. Local.

[30] Ibid.; Jeff Outhit, "Reserve More Industrial Land, Region Told," *Kitchener-Waterloo Record*, June 25,

2003, Final edition, sec. Front.

[31] Region of Waterloo, "Recommended Regional Growth Management Strategy Attachment 1:

Communication and Consultation" (Region of Waterloo, May 2003), 64-5/2/2, Region of Waterloo Archives.

[32] Ibid., 8–9.

[33] Jeff Outhit, "Region Sets Vision for Growth; Strategy Will Be Used to Guide Development, Control

Sprawl," *Kitchener-Waterloo Record*, June 26, 2003, Final edition, sec. Local.

never in your entire career experience a love-in like this has been.' Because there was nobody that spoke against it.[34]

The RGMS was approved in June of 2003.[35]

The Region and the Area Municipalities

Yet even with this bold statement of support, as had been the case in the previous century, work toward the RGMS had been characterized by the debates of a two-tier region. There had, however, been a shift in dynamics between the region and the area municipalities as a result of the 1990s reforms. When presenting that report to council in April of 2001, Seiling had just been elected for the second time[36] to the post he held since 1985,[37] receiving an overwhelming mandate following a light campaign from his only opponent.[38] His report would be presented to the first separated council, on which all councillors except the seven mayors would be directly elected, and would not serve on their area municipal councils. Seiling's smart growth proposal, and the RGMS that would result from it, would be a major initiative of the very first separated council, and it would be designed, written and approved in just one three-year council term.

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[34] Kevin Eby, interview by author, Waterloo, ON.

[35] Region of Waterloo, "Planning Our Future: Regional Growth Management Strategy," 4.

[36] "Beaming Hubby Happy That Wife Has an Easy Win," *Kitchener-Waterloo Record*, November 11, 1997, Final edition, sec. Municipal election '97.

[37] Region of Waterloo, "Meet Ken Seiling."

[38] Bob Burtt, "Race for Regional Chair Is Quietest of Campaign; Seiling's Only Rival Opposes Smoking Bylaw," *Kitchener-Waterloo Record*, November 11, 2000, Final edition, sec. Local; Bob Burtt, "Seiling Sails to Sixth Term," *Kitchener-Waterloo Record*, November 14, 2000, Final edition, sec. Local.

The Regional Growth Management Strategy was, without question, a regional strategy. In his report, Seiling wrote, "As a Regional Council, you are charged with planning the common future of this community."[39] A frequently-asked-questions style document from a later stage of the RGMS process explained that Waterloo Region could no longer plan for separate municipalities:

> While some still think of and plan for Cambridge, Kitchener, North Dumfries, Waterloo, Wellesley, Wilmot and Woolwich as stand-alone municipalities, the reality is that the Region is now one large community comprised of diverse neighbourhoods facing the significant challenges that larger, contemporary municipalities are facing.[40]

In the context of this strong regional plan, tensions arose once again over the question of regional direction and control. Debates over regional reform had mostly settled down, but given the still tender wounds of the late 1990s and early 2000s, the question of regional relationships was on the minds of those drafting and reviewing the RGMS. Seiling's initial proposal explicitly recommended "that the area municipalities be included in the study,"[41] and that "there will need to be public and area municipal input as we work with our various communities to plot our future course."[42]

The Region's approach assumed the continuation of the current two-tier system, but also that a single broad plan was necessary within it. Regional staff were clearly aware of the perception that the RGMS could be seen as a move toward the megacity, especially so soon after

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[39] Seiling, "Smart Growth and the Region of Waterloo: Planning for Our Future," 3.

[40] Region of Waterloo, "Volume 2: Assessment and Options," Waterloo Region in the 21st Century: Planning Our Future (Region of Waterloo, December 2002), 64-5/1/6, Region of Waterloo Archives.

[41] Seiling, "Smart Growth and the Region of Waterloo: Planning for Our Future," 1.

[42] Ibid., 3.

the amalgamation debates. The strategy's documentation explicitly identified and responded to

the question:

> **Would planning in our community be improved if we had a one-tier government? Does the RGMS mean that there will be a one-tier government?** The RGMS assumes a continuation of our current governance system. It is intended to be a strategy for managing the Region's future growth taking better advantage of existing or newly established rules to achieve implementation. It will define how and where we will grow as one Region of the three cities and four townships. [emphasis original][43]

Even in the context of questions about the importance of the area municipalities, the vision of the

RGMS was definitively regional in scope.

Conflicts over the RGMS were, in broad strokes, similar to the conflicts over the 1976

Regional Official Policies Plan. The Region did claim explicit "commitment to build

partnerships and attain support of all interested parties," noting that

> Of key importance, in this regard, was a desire to reach agreement with the area municipalities on how growth might best be accommodated in their jurisdictions. It was realized that the ultimate success of the Strategy was contingent on attaining community support for the overall principles, and area municipal support for the individual actions required to bring these principles to fruition.[44]

To that end, the Region created a steering committee of professionals for the second year

of the two-year process.[45] Its 25 members included regional staff and a staff member from each

of the area municipalities, along with representatives from the development industry, the

University of Waterloo, the Grand River Conservation Authority, the Waterloo Federation of

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[43] Region of Waterloo, "Volume 4: Questions and Answers," Phase 2: Strategy Development, Waterloo Region in the 21st Century: Planning Our Future (Region of Waterloo, December 2002), 23, 64-5/2/1, Region of Waterloo Archives.

[44] Region of Waterloo, "Recommended Regional Growth Management Strategy Attachment 1: Communication and Consultation," 13.

[45] Ibid., 19.

Agriculture, business organizations, and the Region's Ecological and Environmental Advisory Committee.[46]

It is difficult to gauge the actual degree of enthusiasm for the RGMS among the area municipalities. However, that basic vision and the actual product of the strategy suggested big changes to how growth would happen in the area municipalities. As Seiling acknowledged in a 2002 opinion piece in the local daily paper, "With the two-tier model, the region has traditionally provided growth opportunities for all municipalities. However, given financial, practical, environmental, and other issues, we cannot continue to do this in the manner we have in the past."[47][48] Most notably, under the proposed plan, targeting industrial growth to the East Side Lands would mean that the assessment dollars associated with it would accrue to Woolwich and Cambridge.[49] Additional residential growth would be restricted in all of the municipalities, but the City of Waterloo, in particular, would have very little land left for greenfield development, as it would be first of the three cities to reach its borders and the Countryside Line. Assessment

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[46] Ibid., 20.

[47] Ken Seiling, "Does Waterloo Region Have the Will to Face the Challenges of Its Success?," *Kitchener-Waterloo Record*, October 2, 2002, Final edition, sec. Insight.

[48] In a timely example, just a week after regional council adopted Seiling's smart growth report, a report came to council regarding consultations on a ROPP amendment to expand the City Urban Area to allow for additional employment lands. An expansion was proposed in each of the three cities, and was being considered for two of the four townships. Kevin R. Curtis, "Public Meeting Authorization - Proposed Amendments to the Regional Official Policies Plan to Expand the City Urban Area Designation," Planning, Culture and Community Services (Region of Waterloo, April 17, 2001), 3-13/2/1, Region of Waterloo Archives.

[49] While a continuing pressure for planning for assessment is visible, the two-tier system softens it somewhat, as the Region's portion of property tax is a substantial portion, and they provide significant services, for which industrial growth in any part of Waterloo Region will help pay.

growth incentivizes municipalities to want growth located in their municipalities to improve their revenue.[50]

The cities[51] were not necessarily excited about the future limits that the RGMS's vision would impose upon their growth. Yet despite these potential concerns, none of them substantially challenged the direction that the Region had set. Their formal comments to the Region show general support for the vision, while often highlighting concerns or questions on specific points.[52] As former regional planner Kevin Eby explains,

> What happened, throughout the early 2000s, was, I don't think the cities were happy with the fact that we were saying certain portions of your cities were not developable. But at the same time, they deferred to us, because that was our role. … They were not openly fighting us. They weren't necessarily happy, but at the same time, they allowed us to move forward with the long-range planning for the areas. They all fought back a little bit. But in the end, they respected the fact that we have a role to play, and we respect the fact that they have a role to play.[53]

The area municipalities would broadly accept the Region's determinations of where growth should be allocated, eventually leaving only what CAO Mike Murray describes as "a bit of chafing."[54]

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[50] Mike Murray, interview by author, Kitchener, ON, May 5, 2016.

[51] It is noteworthy that most pushback from the area municipalities, both in this period and during the initial ROPP process, seems to come from the cities and not the townships, on which the Region's plan has arguably had much more influence. This may be a reflection of the fact that the goals of leaders in the townships have generally coincided with the goals of the Region, such as policies to preserve agricultural viability. Alternately, it may be a reflection of the fact that the townships generally have very small planning departments compared to the cities, and as a result may have much less institutional capacity to form longer term views on regional planning questions.

[52] See Region of Waterloo, "Recommended Regional Growth Management Strategy Attachment 1: Communication and Consultation."

[53] Kevin Eby, interview by author, Waterloo, ON.

[54] Mike Murray, interview by author, Kitchener, ON.

So as with the creation of the first ROPP, the area municipalities did not publicly express great concern over the broad vision of the strategy, but some did express concern over the Region's approach to creating it. Area municipal concerns centred on the speed with which the Region was pursuing the plan, and on the way in which the area municipalities were engaged. The City of Waterloo's official comments on the RGMS were critical of the Region for pushing the plan through too quickly, and without significant collaboration with the area municipalities.[55] The Mayor of the City of Waterloo told a regional planner during a city council meeting, "There's a big difference between consultation and dictation," and indicated she believed that "It seems this (planning) book is a fait accompli. In planning our future, I believe there is a great need for more communication between the region and the cities of Kitchener, Waterloo and Cambridge."[56]

The City of Cambridge, while being broadly supportive of the goals of the draft plan,[57] expressed similar concerns about process. They noted that "public input has been mostly limited

[55] Region of Waterloo, "Recommended Regional Growth Management Strategy Attachment 1: Communication and Consultation," sec. 2.

[56] Carol Goodwin, "Waterloo Angry at Region's Haste on Growth Plan," *Kitchener-Waterloo Record*, February 18, 2003, Final edition, sec. Local.

[57] One more substantial disagreement between the Region and the City of Cambridge was the question of whether Cambridge's northern urban area should be allowed to meet the urban areas across municipal boundaries, and the effect that such a meeting would have on Cambridge's identity within the Region. Region of Waterloo, "Recommended Regional Growth Management Strategy Attachment 1: Communication and Consultation," sec. 1. "What we value as a community is the rural area within our boundaries, our separation from the other communities, and our distinctiveness from the other communities," Cambridge Mayor Doug Craig would say. Jeff Outhit, "Region's Vision for Future under Fire," *Kitchener-Waterloo Record*, August 10, 2002, Final edition, sec. Local. This concern seemed to disappear from the next staff report from Cambridge to the Region the following spring.

to commenting on concepts prepared by regional staff," and that "there was no attempt to establish a common vision before moving ahead."[58]

Regional staff continued to engage with the area municipalities. Despite the concerns raised by area municipal councils in February of 2003, the final RGMS was approved in June, more or less in keeping with the original timeline proposed for the plan.[59] None of the mayors and none of the other regional councillors voted against it.[60]

The newly separated council had taken a significant step to advance regional planning. There is a sense among a number of those involved that the separated council was a crucial element in the success of the RGMS. As former regional planner Kevin Curtis explains,

> The key thing that occurred, in my mind, the seminal thing, really, around 2000, was the first direct elected regional council. And without that, the future would have been very different. I don't know how it would have been different, but you wouldn't have got what we got, the way we got it, and probably not in the same timeframe. It would have been a very different focus.[61]

Region of Waterloo, "Recommended Regional Growth Management Strategy Attachment 1: Communication and Consultation," sec. 1. The decision was largely based on opposition from landowners in the proposed buffer area, and regional councillors, including one from Cambridge, agreed that farming would not be viable in such a small strip. Jeff Outhit, "Greenbelt Opened up for Growth," *Kitchener-Waterloo Record*, May 21, 2003, Final edition, sec. Local.

[58] Region of Waterloo, "Recommended Regional Growth Management Strategy Attachment 1: Communication and Consultation," sec. 1.

[59] Region of Waterloo, "Volume 2: Assessment and Options," 4.

[60] Outhit, "Region Sets Vision for Growth; Strategy Will Be Used to Guide Development, Control Sprawl."

[61] Kevin Curtis, interview by author, Kitchener, ON.

Ken Seiling concurs, saying, "My view is that having the separated council probably strengthened our ability to develop and apply the RGMS."[62] He explains that some distance from the area municipalities has helped regional councillors focus on a regional perspective, rather than following the directions of their area municipal councils:

> under the old system we got things done. But under the new system we have councillors who … spend their time and energy and efforts doing things with the regional council. It's not … secondary. So we don't have people arriving at committee saying, 'Can we defer this? Because they haven't told me back home what they think of it yet.'[63]

This distance is perhaps especially important when it comes to planning. The duties of the two levels of government with respect to planning differ significantly from each other. Regional planning has been high-level, while the area municipalities deal with day-to-day issues around changes to land use, such as neighbourhood disputes over zone change applications. These kinds of neighbourhood issues are often the most contentious. The separated councillors not only had more time for and could focus their attention on planning at the regional level; they also would not face the complaints common from homeowners whose neighbourhoods are experiencing the redevelopment and intensification called for by the plan. Thus the move to separated councils perhaps helped regional councillors focus on what they did best. As Kevin Eby articulates,

> My experiences with two-tier governments are that they're both exceptionally good at doing what they do best. At the regional level, it's long-range planning. They're exceptionally good at having that long range vision …. and developing that vision and then living up to it. The local levels – and this is not meant in a derogatory fashion at all – but the local levels, from a planning perspective, are really good at fences, noise, parking, and local councils with things like dogs. And both are really, really important. But when you mix them together, what you get is you get dogs and fences and noise dominating the planning process. And so you don't get the long-

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[62] Ken Seiling, interview by author, Kitchener, ON.

[63] Ibid.

range planning and the long range commitment to it that you get at the regional council level.[64]

Eby goes on to suggest that the two levels of municipal government in Waterloo Region respect each other's roles. "Because of that," he says, "the two-tier system here works. And it works far better here than anywhere else in Ontario. There is no other example in Ontario that works like this."[65]

These distinct planning roles, and the new definition brought to them by a separated council that would face far fewer conflicts over specific plots of land in specific neighbourhoods, would undergird the Region's ability to quickly create a bold strategy to change how growth management is done in Waterloo Region. Combined with significant leadership from a strong elected chair, the first separated council had more leeway than its predecessors to embrace smart growth.

A New Provincial Government

Despite picking up the ball on smart growth and forming smart growth panels across the province, the Progressive Conservative government, finally led by Premier Ernie Eves, would not produce an actual plan for the Central Ontario area surrounding Toronto.[66] As Richard White notes, it would be difficult for a government so predisposed to dislike largescale government intervention to actually implement a large scale planning exercise in the area.[67] Yet governments do not last forever, and the Eves government would be voted out of office in October of 2003.

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[64] Kevin Eby, interview by author, Waterloo, ON.

[65] Ibid.

[66] White, *The Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe in Historical Perspective*, 42.

[67] Ibid.

The new Liberal government, led by Premier Dalton McGuinty, would pick up and carry the smart growth banner. As White observes, thanks to the previous PC government, "The ground was prepared for another government, one more inclined towards intervention, to develop a regional plan. It is a surprising legacy for such an anti-government government."[68]

What would emerge from the new government over the next three years was a smart growth-based plan for the broad area that had been covered by the Central Ontario Smart Growth Panel, which came to be known as the Greater Golden Horseshoe.

By the time there was a new provincial government prepared to look seriously at regional planning for smart growth, Waterloo Region's Regional Growth Management Strategy was in place. It was also unusual. In 2004, a designer from Urban Strategies, Michel Trocmé, would note that "What's happening in Waterloo Region is quite unique," as "Most communities in Canada that are [Waterloo Region's] size are still expanding at the edges, consuming nearby farmlands, hamlets and towns."[69] He added that most communities doing such planning at the time were larger cities whose urban growth had already reached their municipal boundaries.[70]

There were undoubtedly many factors influencing and aiding the provincial government in its policy aims. Nevertheless, the Region's local progress on smart growth was convenient. The RGMS became one model on which the province based its subsequent policies, taking the opportunity to build on the Region's experience and expertise. As the provincial minister, David Caplan, would later say in a speech in Cambridge, Waterloo Region

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[68] Ibid.

[69] Lianne Elliott, "Region's Growth Strategy Praised; Only Larger Communities Have Similar Plans, Urban Designer Says," *Kitchener-Waterloo Record*, September 29, 2004, Final edition, sec. Local.

[70] Ibid.

is already doing phenomenal work. In fact, you are the leaders in growth planning in Canada. As you may know, the province drew some inspiration and maybe even borrowed a few ideas from Waterloo Region's growth management strategy. Borrowing, of course, is, as they say, the sincerest form of flattery.[71]

The Region had already been in the room with the province on smart growth for some time. This was perhaps visible early on, during the Conservative years, as the Region of Waterloo's commissioner of transportation and environmental services, Mike Murray, was appointed to the Smart Growth panel for central Ontario; he would be the only municipal civil servant on the 18-member committee, which was chaired by Mississauga mayor Hazel McCallion.[72] By that time, the Region had been working on the RGMS for months. While members of the panel were not intended to represent their municipalities,[73] it could not have escaped the Harris government's notice that Murray was a commissioner in a regional municipality that was working its way through a novel local strategy for smart growth. The panel's final report was released in April of 2003, while the RGMS was finalized in June of 2003. Both were happening "in parallel," and Murray thus had an opportunity to facilitate learning between the two groups as they went along.[74]

By the time Dalton McGuinty became premier, the Regional Growth Management Strategy was a few months old. As the provincial government pursued smart growth planning in

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[71] Philip Jalsevac, "Control Sprawl or Risk Food, Water Supply; Urban Minister Urges Protection of Farmland, Praises Waterloo Region for Growth Planning," *Kitchener-Waterloo Record*, May 4, 2007, sec. Front.

[72] Central Ontario Smart Growth Panel, "Shape the Future: Central Ontario Smart Growth Panel Final Report"; Mike Murray, interview by author, Kitchener, ON.

[73] Jeff Outhit, "Region Being 'Forced' to Join Body on Toronto-Area Growth," *Kitchener-Waterloo Record*, February 12, 2002, Final edition, sec. Local.

[74] Mike Murray, interview by author, Kitchener, ON.

the Greater Golden Horseshoe, it would do so using Waterloo Region's expertise. In late 2004,[75] the Region of Waterloo's director of community planning, Kevin Eby, would be seconded to the province on a half-time basis for an 18 month period; one of only two in Ontario.[76] While continuing to work on RGMS implementation, Eby would help write the province's smart growth plans. Yet as Mike Murray says, while it is true that "the Growth Plan was influenced by ours," there were "even more subtle … connections between the work that they were doing and the work that we were doing," from the Central Ontario Smart Growth Panel to the Growth Plan.[77]

Two major pieces of provincial legislation would emerge in 2005: the Greenbelt Act and the Places to Grow Act. Each was followed by its own plan.[78] Most simply described, the Greenbelt dictates where growth cannot happen, while the Growth Plan dictates where growth will happen.

With the Greenbelt, the McGuinty government would, in one move, create the "largest and most strongly protected greenbelt in the world," containing "nearly two million acres."[79] While farming, aggregate mining, and other rural activities would continue in the Greenbelt,

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[75] Kevin Eby, interview by author, Waterloo, ON.

[76] Jalsevac, "Control Sprawl or Risk Food, Water Supply; Urban Minister Urges Protection of Farmland, Praises Waterloo Region for Growth Planning."

[77] Mike Murray, interview by author, Kitchener, ON.

[78] Province of Ontario, "The Greenbelt Plan 2005," February 28, 2005, http://www.mah.gov.on.ca/Page189.aspx; Ontario Ministry of Infrastructure, "Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe: Office Consolidation, January 2012."

[79] Ontario Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, "Greenbelt Protection," May 16, 2016, http://www.mah.gov.on.ca/Page187.aspx.

urban development would be permanently banned.[80] Creating the Greenbelt required a decisive

imposition that significantly affected the interests of developers and farmers within its

boundaries. Politically, as environmentalist Kevin Thomason says, "the Liberals … realized that

they'd bitten off more than what they could chew" in extending the Greenbelt through the

municipalities of the Inner Ring, closest to Toronto.[81] The Region of Waterloo, in the Outer

Ring, asked to be included in the Greenbelt on three occasions during the province's consultation

period, in 2004 and early 2005, to cover the local moraines upon which the area depends for its

water supply.[82] In the province's final version of the Greenbelt, the only part in Waterloo Region

was a small corner of the Beverly Swamp on the very edge of the Township of North

Dumfries.[83] Waterloo Region's moraines would not be included in the final map of the

Greenbelt.

While the Region was largely left out of the Greenbelt, it would play a significant role in

the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe. The Growth Plan was designed to require

higher levels of intensification and density from its 21 single- and upper-tier municipalities. The

Growth Plan began by defining the edge of existing urban boundaries in each municipality,

based on where they stood in 2006. These mapped areas would be the built-up area. The

province then set minimum targets for intensification, which is the percentage of new growth

that must be accommodated within the built-up area. It also set minimum targets for greenfield

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[80] Province of Ontario, "The Greenbelt Plan 2005."

[81] Kevin Thomason, interview by author, Waterloo, ON, November 12, 2015.

[82] Fiona McCrea, "Co-Ordinated Review of Ontario's Land Use Policy Plans," Planning, Development and Legislative Services (Region of Waterloo, May 26, 2015), 226–28, http://www.regionofwaterloo.ca/en/regionalGovernment/resources/PW/PA2015-0526.1.pdf#page=215.

[83] Ibid., 227.

density, meaning that any urban expansions would have to accommodate a certain number of

people and jobs per hectare, so that newly developed areas will use land more efficiently than

they had in the past. The minimum intensification targets were set at 40%,[84] and the minimum

greenfield density targets were set at 50 people and jobs per hectare.[85] The Growth Plan would

also establish a series of 25 urban growth centres to target for additional growth. Three of those

would be in Waterloo Region: Uptown Waterloo and Downtown Kitchener would be given

density targets of 200 people and jobs per hectare, while Downtown Cambridge (formerly Galt)

would be given a target of 150.[86]

Together, these key features of the Growth Plan and the Greenbelt would be at the centre

of the province's efforts at smart growth in the coming decade.

RGMS Implementation: A Document Becomes an Idea

As the provincial government continued to develop its smart growth plans, the Region

worked to implement the RGMS. The independence of a separated council had contributed to its

passage, and in the context of the day, it would have been fair to assume that regional

government might be a problem for RGMS implementation. The concern that Councillor

Strickland had raised about the plan was a serious concern. As he noted, "All of these battles are

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[84] Ontario Ministry of Infrastructure, "Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe: Office Consolidation, January 2012," 14.

[85] Ibid., 19.

[86] Ontario Ministry of Infrastructure, "Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe: Office Consolidation, January 2012."

going to be fought at the local councils…. If this is going to work, it's going to be absolutely

critical that all councillors of all municipalities are on the same page."[87]

While there were some mixed reviews on the Region's process from the area

municipalities during the creation of the RGMS, it was after the approval of the plan that it

appeared two-tier government might actually be a benefit to the RGMS, rather than a hindrance.

As Kevin Eby, then director of community planning and responsible for RGMS implementation,

explains:

> The RGMS had 34 recommendations in it. And we broke them down … and there
> was really 75 distinct pieces. And we took a look at them and said, okay, we're
> responsible for implementing these. And we looked at the 75 and said, maybe 25 of
> them are directly under our control. The rest, we have to get other people to do….
> [We] spent weeks working through flow charts, and finally came to the conclusion
> you have to do it all at once. And you have to advance almost 50 projects all at once.
> And that's when we stepped back and said, Okay…. As long as we provide a good
> framework within which to do this, and if we can get everybody rowing in the same
> direction, then in fact, the fact they're not under our control is actually a strength.[88]

The coordinating committee[89] that the Region put together was comprised of mid-level

staff representatives from each of the municipalities. It allowed the Region to share information,

and later for the municipalities to report back on results of their efforts.[90] As a result, as Eby

says,

> The most amazing thing happened about two years out. And that was that … it
> became an idea. It became a concept that lost virtual relationship with the actual
> document that was produced. And there were decisions being made at councils all

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[87] Outhit, "Co-Operation Key to Planned Growth."

[88] Kevin Eby, interview by author, Waterloo, ON.

[89] For the membership list, see Region of Waterloo, "Regional Growth Management Strategy

Implementation Update Report" (Region of Waterloo, September 2004), 21,

http://civics.ca/documents/SEPTEMBER_2004_IMPLEMENTATION_UPDATE.pdf.

[90] Kevin Eby, interview by author, Waterloo, ON.

over. And staff meetings where people were saying, 'you know, we're doing this because of the RGMS. This is the RGMS implementation.' It's nowhere near the RGMS. It's not even mentioned. It became this overriding kind of ideal that people wanted to live up to, people started to believe in … If they've taken ownership of it, this is the ultimate success. And that's what happened with the RGMS…. Kitchener staff, Waterloo staff, a number of the township staff. If you asked them, it was theirs. They took ownership of their portion of it. They believed in it. And that's where we became successful.[91]

The RGMS was being treated as a vision. It was also being treated as a requirement. As Kevin Curtis explains, "The Growth Strategy had no legislative mandate. It's not law. You don't have to do it. You don't have comply. And yet what came out, even before the province came out with Places to Grow: people started talking about this document as if it was all in force and effect."[92]

There are, of course, a small percentage of councillors within the area municipal councils who did not fully embrace the Region's vision for smart growth; some oppose intensification, while others still do not appreciate regional rules imposed on their activities.[93] But they are overwhelmed by those who do.[94] In some ways, then, the implementation phase of the RGMS[95] was an enormous win for regional planning. The most lasting wins in politics are often those in which others see your vision as their own. Despite the many actors needed to get such a broad strategy off the ground, over years of collaboration, it was widely embraced across the area municipalities.

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[91] Ibid.

[92] Kevin Curtis, interview by author, Kitchener, ON.

[93] Mike Murray, interview by author, Kitchener, ON.

[94] Mike Murray estimates that those who are not on board might be 10 or 20% of the area municipal councillors. Ibid.

[95] For an in-depth treatment of municipal implementation activities, see Wegener, Raine, and Hanning, "Insights into the Government's Role in Food System Policy Making."

LRT: Investing in Implementation

Early on in the RGMS planning, light rail transit (LRT) was seen as a crucial part of its implementation.[96] Rapid transit along the central spine would be necessary for intensification, to draw development and residents to core areas, and accommodate growth while limiting and directing urban expansion. While such a direct and intentional connection between regional planning and regional transit service had been loosely envisioned in the original 1976 Regional Official Policies Plan, the Region's ability to move forward on the project relied on the still very recent changes that put the Region in charge of transit.

Within a year of taking over transit service, in September of 2000, the Region had instituted local transit service linking Cambridge to the other two cities, which had previously only been served by an inter-city carrier.[97] The year after this basic and crucial step was taken, the Region was already putting money into the LRT project, seizing a long-awaited opportunity to purchase the Waterloo Spur rail corridor for future use as transit corridor.[98]

By 2002, as the significant work on the RGMS continued, the Region continued with its plans for rapid transit service along the central corridor. In April of 2002, regional council approved a proposal for a first phase of a four-phase light rail system, which would initially run

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[96] Graham Vincent, Wanda Richardson, and Larry E. Kotseff, "Transportation in the 21st Century - Implementation of the Region's Growth Management Strategy," Planning, Housing and Community Services (Region of Waterloo, April 10, 2002), ROW 64-5/1/2, Region of Waterloo Archives.

[97] Aagaard, "Transit Link Dissolves the 'Wall.'"

[98] Carol Goodwin, "Rail Line Holds Great Potential," *Kitchener‑Waterloo Record*, March 2, 2001, Final edition, sec. Local; Dave Pink, "Region Seeks Ideas for Transit Corridor," *Kitchener‑Waterloo Record*, December 1, 2001, Final edition, sec. Local.

from St. Jacobs, in south Woolwich, through Waterloo, and to Downtown Kitchener.[99] The

initial plan would include a proposal for a convention centre, particularly in the hopes of

attracting federal investment for economic development.[100]

As the plan became more concrete in 2003, the convention centre was removed, and the

first phase of LRT was revised to run from north Waterloo to south Kitchener, with express

buses running to Ainslie Terminal in south Cambridge where a second phase of the project

would be planned.[101] Nevertheless, the outline of the route would remain roughly the same. It

more or less matched the big orange conceptual arrow from the 1976 ROPP. The Region was

moving ahead on very old plans for a central transit corridor.

It was doing so, unabashedly, for land use purposes. As Gerry Thompson,[102] then the

Region's Chief Administrative Officer and a major driver of both the LRT[103] and the RGMS,

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[99] Jeff Outhit, "Region Fast-Tracks Streetcar Proposal; Huge Project Including Convention Centre Dependent on Federal Funds," *Kitchener-Waterloo Record*, April 11, 2002, Final edition, sec. Front.

[100] Ibid.

[101] Jeff Outhit, "Region Raves over Light Rail Plan Makeover," *Kitchener-Waterloo Record*, May 29, 2003, Final edition, sec. Front.

[102] It should be noted that, despite similar last names and similar senior administrative roles, Gerry Thompson and Bill Thomson were different people. While Bill Thomson would serve as the Region's first planning commissioner, Gerry Thompson had served as a transportation planner when the Region was formed in 1973, eventually becoming the Region's Chief Administrative Officer in 1991. Jeff Outhit, "Region's Bureaucrat Honoured," *Kitchener-Waterloo Record*, November 24, 2003, Final edition, sec. Local. He would retire in 2004. Bob Burtt, "Top Bureaucrat Set to Retire after 31 Years with Region," *Kitchener-Waterloo Record*, March 22, 2004, Final edition, sec. Local.

[103] Ken Seiling, interview by author, Kitchener, ON.

said in 2002, "We're not trying to fix the transportation system. What we're trying to do is build an urban form."[104]

Despite a serious, if not primary, focus on land use planning, LRT would become a crucial part of the most recent Regional Transportation Master Plan. Work to update the previous plan, from 1999, began in 2007.[105] The final version of the plan aims to increase trips made by transit to about 15%, and by walking and cycling to 12%, up from about 4% and 8%, respectively, in 2006.[106] Overall, the Region's goal is to reduce private automobile trips from 85% to 70%.[107]

A crucial part of this plan was a redesign of the transit system, for which the LRT would serve as the backbone. The redesign meant that "The 19 kilometre [LRT] corridor will form the spine of this efficient, integrated transportation network that will reach out to all corners of the region."[108] A new network of express buses would run on major corridors, particularly in an east-west direction, to connect to the spine of the LRT. By 2009, in the first decade of the Region-operated Grand River Transit, transit ridership had increased 74%.[109]

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[104] Jeff Outhit, "Training Growth; Planners Say a Light Rail Line Could Be Used to Shape Development in Waterloo Region," *Kitchener-Waterloo Record*, October 19, 2002, Final edition, sec. Perspectives.

[105] Region of Waterloo, "Regional Transportation Master Plan Summary," accessed July 6, 2016, http://www.regionofwaterloo.ca/en/regionalGovernment/resources/RTMP_Summary-FIN.pdf.

[106] AECOM, "Regional Transportation Master Plan" (Region of Waterloo, January 2011), 10–14, http://www.regionofwaterloo.ca/en/regionalGovernment/resources/RTMP_FINAL_REPORT_PDF.pdf.

[107] Ibid.

[108] Region of Waterloo, "The Story of Rapid Transit in Waterloo Region," 21.

[109] AECOM, "Regional Transportation Master Plan," iii.

Work toward the light rail transit project took many years,[110] overlapping and intertwined with efforts to implement the RGMS. The project was, at this stage, not without controversy. In particular, much of the most fractious debate around the council table on light rail transit centred on the fact that, based on lower transit ridership, Cambridge would not receive trains in the first phase of the LRT project.[111] There was, however, broad agreement on the goals of the project for transforming land use, and the only votes against the project were based on LRT not being extended to Cambridge in the first phase.[112] The LRT project was approved in June of 2009.[113]

Regional Official Plan

The same month that regional council first approved the full LRT project, it approved the Region's new Regional Official Plan[114] (ROP).[115] As in past planning processes, there had been

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[110] See Region of Waterloo, "The Story of Rapid Transit in Waterloo Region," 15–16.

[111] Jeff Outhit, "Cambridge Transit Gets Short Shrift, Mayor Says," *Waterloo Region Record*, May 13, 2009, Final edition, sec. Local; Jeff Outhit, "Cambridge Report Boosts Buses; As Region's Vote on Rapid Transit Nears, Conflicting Reports Are Tabled," *Waterloo Region Record*, June 20, 2009, Final edition, sec. Front.

[112] Region of Waterloo, "Regional Council Minutes: Wednesday, June 24, 2009" (Region of Waterloo, June 24, 2009), http://www.regionofwaterloo.ca/en/regionalGovernment/resources/CC2009-0820.pdf; Frances Barrick, "Region Approves Rail Plan; Council Votes 15-1 in Favour of Bringing Electric Trains to Region," *Waterloo Region Record*, June 25, 2009, Final edition, sec. Front.

[113] Barrick, "Region Approves Rail Plan; Council Votes 15-1 in Favour of Bringing Electric Trains to Region."

[114] There are various explanations for why the choice was made to call the 2009 plan the Regional Official Plan (ROP) rather than the Regional Official Policies Plan that had been used for all previous versions. On the one hand, the new nomenclature reflects the extent of the mapping present for particular designations in the most recent regional plan, while previous plans had focused more on broad envelopes. Rob Horne, interview by author, Kitchener, ON, December 21, 2015. On the other hand, even the new ROP would broadly be a policy plan, as land

a great deal of back-and-forth between the Region and the area municipalities over the new ROP.

As then Regional Planning Commissioner Rob Horne says, "Once you get a plan together,

there's a real check-in in a two-tier structure: are you infringing on what I'm doing?"[116] While

the back-and-forth between staff members at the various levels during the "wordsmithing" of the

ROP involved "staff … engaging each other pretty aggressively," the elected officials at both the

regional and area municipal councils served to provide some stability in what could be a

contentious process.[117]

At least some of the back-and-forth was likely attributable to the new scope with which

the new ROP would deal with the urban areas. In past plans, there was a significant focus on

"rural, environmental, and aggregate" policies.[118] As Kevin Curtis explains, "The urban area

policies were very broad, very general, and quite light. That was left to the municipalities to do

their thing."[119] The RGMS had changed the playing field, as it

> fundamentally said …we have to start planning as though we don't have any
> municipal boundaries, aside from the outer regional boundary. And we had to spend
> a little more time talking about, where does it make the most sense to grow? And
> identify what the reasons behind what makes the most sense. That's where we had
> that discussion. And that's where you got a lot of the political discourse.[120]

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use designations are still largely set by the area municipalities within broad envelopes. From this standpoint, naming

the new plan the ROP rather than the ROPP was a simple way to distinguish between the old official plan that was

still in effect and the new draft upon which the Region was working. Kevin Eby, interview by author, Waterloo, ON.

[115] Region of Waterloo, "Council-Adopted Regional Official Plan," June 16, 2009,

http://www.regionofwaterloo.ca/en/regionalGovernment/PreviousROP.asp.

[116] Rob Horne, interview by author, Kitchener, ON.

[117] Ibid.

[118] Kevin Curtis, interview by author, Kitchener, ON.

[119] Ibid.

[120] Ibid.

The wordsmithing over the plan would matter, because the ROP would give legal force to the Regional Growth Management Strategy. While the Region and the area municipalities had largely come to embrace the RGMS and to own its vision, the RGMS had no legal force. The Regional Official Plan was what would enshrine that vision in law.[121] It would also serve to bring the Region's official plan into conformity with the provincial Growth Plan, as required by provincial law.

Yet while these new effects of the plan were important, a number of the key features of the RGMS had been incorporated into the old ROPP by the time the new Regional Official Plan was approved. One was the Region's designation of several Environmentally Sensitive Landscapes, which, like the Greenbelt, looked to protect "environmental systems at the landscape level, rather than just protecting the individual features within them."[122] While the project faced pushback from a number of landowners, with a variety of petitions circulated, it also received significant support from those living elsewhere in the Region.[123] After significant local environmental advocacy,[124] Amendment 22 was passed by Regional Council in May of 2006.[125] The amendment was appealed to the Ontario Municipal Board by a number of

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[121] Rob Horne, interview by author, Kitchener, ON.

[122] McCrea, "Co-Ordinated Review of Ontario's Land Use Policy Plans," 228.

[123] Region of Waterloo, "Environmentally Sensitive Landscapes Response Document" (Region of Waterloo, October 19, 2005), Appendix F, 3-6/10/2, Region of Waterloo Archives.

[124] Kevin Thomason, interview by author, Waterloo, ON.

[125] Region of Waterloo, "Regional Official Policies Plan," September 2006, Internet Archive, https://web.archive.org/web/20150714201416/http://www.regionofwaterloo.ca/en/regionalGovernment/RegionalOfficialPoliciesPlan.asp.

individuals and the Environmentally Sensitive Property Owners' Association,[126] but the Ontario Municipal Board upheld the policy in September of 2007.[127]

Changes had also been made to the earlier ROPP to facilitate rapid transit. In March of 2007, an amendment was passed that updated the plan to show that the Region had assumed responsibility for providing transit years earlier, and to explicitly identify rapid transit as a "viable transportation alternative for the Central Transit Corridor"[128] while providing a "defined boundary" for that corridor to replace what had previously been a conceptual designation.[129] No one appealed the amendment, and it came into effect in April of 2007.[130]

The inclusion of the first phase of the East Side Lands was also accomplished by a ROPP amendment, approved by the Region in August of 2007, which finally worked its way through Ontario Municipal Board appeals to come into effect in 2009.[131] The amendment was designed to designate the first phase of the East Side Lands for "large lot industrial or business park uses."[132]

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[126] Ibid.

[127] McCrea, "Co-Ordinated Review of Ontario's Land Use Policy Plans," 228.

[128] Region of Waterloo, "Regional Official Policies Plan Amendment No. 26: Introduction of New Transit and Rapid Transit Policies and Mapping," 6.

[129] Ibid., 24.

[130] Ibid., 4.

[131] Region of Waterloo, "Regional Official Policies Plan Amendment No. 28: City Urban Area Expansion: East Side Phase One Employment Lands," October 2009, Internet Archive, https://web.archive.org/web/20150714221208/http://www.regionofwaterloo.ca/en/regionalGovernment/resources/Amendment28.pdf.

[132] Ibid., 26.

With these three policies included, the broad vision of the RGMS had gained important footholds in the ROPP. But their inclusion was piecemeal. These policies were designed to work together and with other policies, and the new plan would include three that were particularly noteworthy: the new Protected Countryside, the Countryside Line, and the land budget.

Figure 4: Map 7 of the Regional Official Plan as approved by the province in 2010, showing the Protected Countryside and Countryside Line. Source: Corporate Services, Information Technology Services, Region of Waterloo. Copyright: Region of Waterloo. Used with permission.

First, a crucial element of the ROP was the Protected Countryside designation. After exclusion from the Greenbelt, and as part of the ROP process, the Region tried to "incorporate, to the extent possible, some of the key concepts of the Greenbelt Plan directly into the Region's

new Official Plan."[133] The Region's "new Protected Countryside designation" was designed "to permanently protect a broad band of environmental features, agricultural lands, and portions of the Paris, Galt and Waterloo Moraines."[134] The Protected Countryside is intended to offer permanent protection from urban development to the east and south of the main urban areas, and covers significant portions of North Dumfries, Wilmot, and Wellesley, as well as portions of the urban municipalities. The ROP also instituted provisions for a strengthened Greenlands Network to focus on connectivity and health at a landscape level.[135] These policies, in addition to new policies to support agriculture and address aggregate mining, were intended to create local protections similar to those provided by the provincial Greenbelt.[136] The Protected Countryside, in particular, is an effort to predictably protect a large, contiguous rural area from development.

The Protected Countryside was perhaps the most controversial aspect of the new ROP, at least around the regional council table. While a number of items were slated for internal and external discussion during the provincial review period,[137] two specific motions passed upon approval of the ROP to delay implementation of the Protected Countryside. The first motion, proposed by a Kitchener councillor, asked that designation of the Protected Countryside in southwest Kitchener be delayed, along with designation of a Regional Recharge Area, pending

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[133] McCrea, "Co-Ordinated Review of Ontario's Land Use Policy Plans," 228.

[134] Ibid., 229.

[135] Region of Waterloo, "Council-Adopted Regional Official Plan," chap. 7.

[136] McCrea, "Co-Ordinated Review of Ontario's Land Use Policy Plans," 228–29.

[137] Region of Waterloo, "Regional Council Minutes: Tuesday, June 16, 2009" (Region of Waterloo, June 16, 2009), 13–15, pp. 269-286, http://www.regionofwaterloo.ca/en/regionalGovernment/resources/CouncilMinutesJune162009.pdf.

ongoing water and transportation studies.[138] Against the wishes of Kitchener's city council,[139]

and a few landowners in the area,[140] regional council finally voted to extend the Protected

Countryside to southwest Kitchener the following year, in June of 2010.[141][142] A second motion

had asked the province to defer approval of the Protected Countryside so that further

consultations with landowners could be conducted.[143] The Region mailed notices of the

[138] Ibid., 16.

[139] City of Kitchener, "Development & Technical Services Committee Minutes: June 21, 2010," June 21, 2010, 67,

http://lf.kitchener.ca/uniquesig0d1d2aa1a38f6e69dc1e79e99d780c34f537a34d9c901a0d7cbb1976cbfdd057/uniquesig0/WeblinkExt/DocView.aspx?id=1017043&dbid=0.

[140] Region of Waterloo, "Planning and Works Committee Minutes: Tuesday June 22, 2010," June 22, 2010, 3,

https://web.archive.org/web/20110712155004/http://www.regionofwaterloo.ca/en/regionalGovernment/resources/PC2010-0622.pdf.

[141] All but one of the regional councillors for Kitchener voted, both at committee and at council, against

asking the province to approve the Protected Countryside in southwest Kitchener, citing concerns over process and

consultation and advocating for the matter to be dealt with at a later five-year review as Kitchener council had

requested. Region of Waterloo, "Planning and Works Committee Minutes: Tuesday June 22, 2010"; Region of

Waterloo, "Regional Council Minutes: Wednesday, June 30, 2010," June 30, 2010, Internet Archive,

https://web.archive.org/web/20110712151838/http://www.regionofwaterloo.ca/en/regionalGovernment/resources/CC2010-0630.pdf; City of Kitchener, "Development & Technical Services Committee Minutes: June 21, 2010."

[142] The area would be included in the Protected Countryside, but would not appear on a map in the ROP

until the final version was finally in effect in 2015. Region of Waterloo, "Council-Adopted Regional Official Plan";

Region of Waterloo, "Regional Official Plan," December 22, 2010,

http://www.regionofwaterloo.ca/en/regionalGovernment/PreviousROP.asp; Region of Waterloo, "Regional Official

Plan," June 18, 2015.

[143] Region of Waterloo, "Regional Council Minutes: Tuesday, June 16, 2009," 17.

consultations to 4800 property owners,[144] and after four additional public open houses with more than 300 total attendees, 42 written comments supported the Protected Countryside policies while 14 opposed them.[145] [146] Common concerns named by those who were opposed to Protected Countryside designations was "that they have the potential to impact property values and/or restrict the freedom of property owners to make future land use decisions."[147] Following the consultations, again in the following year, regional council asked the province to implement the Protected Countryside in June of 2010.[148]

A second crucial feature implemented by the ROP was the Region's Countryside Line. The Countryside Line had made an appearance in the RGMS,[149] but the ROP would be needed to give it legal force. The Countryside Line would serve as a long term growth boundary

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[144] Kevin Curtis and John Lubczynski, "Protected Countryside Policies, New Regional Official Plan," Memorandum, (November 17, 2009), 1, http://www.regionofwaterloo.ca/en/regionalGovernment/resources/PROTECTEDCOUNTRYSIDEMEMO.pdf.

[145] Kevin Eby and Kevin Curtis, "Response to the Province's Proposed Modifications to the Regional Official Plan," Planning, Housing and Community Services (Region of Waterloo, June 22, 2010), 8, Internet Archive, https://web.archive.org/web/20110712155004/http://www.regionofwaterloo.ca/en/regionalGovernment/resources/PC2010-0622.pdf.

[146] There are noticeable parallels between this approach to managing landowner concerns and the approach the Region took to implementing the ESPA policies in the 1970s. Mass landowner notice combined with opportunities to provide comment and manage disagreement seems to have had the effect of building awareness and buy-in.

[147] Curtis and Lubczynski, "Protected Countryside Policies, New Regional Official Plan," 2.

[148] Region of Waterloo, "Planning and Works Committee Minutes: Tuesday June 22, 2010," 4; Region of Waterloo, "Regional Council Minutes: Wednesday, June 30, 2010," 3.

[149] Region of Waterloo, "Planning Our Future: Regional Growth Management Strategy."

surrounding the existing urban areas, and in places where the Countryside Line met the Protected Countryside, the location of the Countryside Line would be considered to be permanent.[150]

A third, and perhaps most crucial, element that would be brought into force by the ROP was the Region's land budget. The land budget was significantly less visible than the Protected Countryside and the Countryside Line. Its invisibility is partly due to its overtly technical nature, but it is also due to the fact that the land budget does not actually appear within the ROP itself.

Instead, the land budget[151] would be a crucial component of the calculations used to create the ROP. It would determine how much additional land would need to be converted to urban uses to accommodate urban growth during the life of the plan. The land budget was therefore a particularly crucial input into the ROP, as it would determine how much the urban areas would have to expand.

Having such a land budget was a key requirement of the province's Growth Plan. As the land budget document states, "The Region's land budget was based on the intensification and density requirements of the Growth Plan."[152]At its simplest, the Region's land budget took the number of people the Region was required to accommodate, allocated 45% of that to intensification within the built-up area, and looked at how much space would be required to house the other 55%, given the density requirements for new greenfield developments. They

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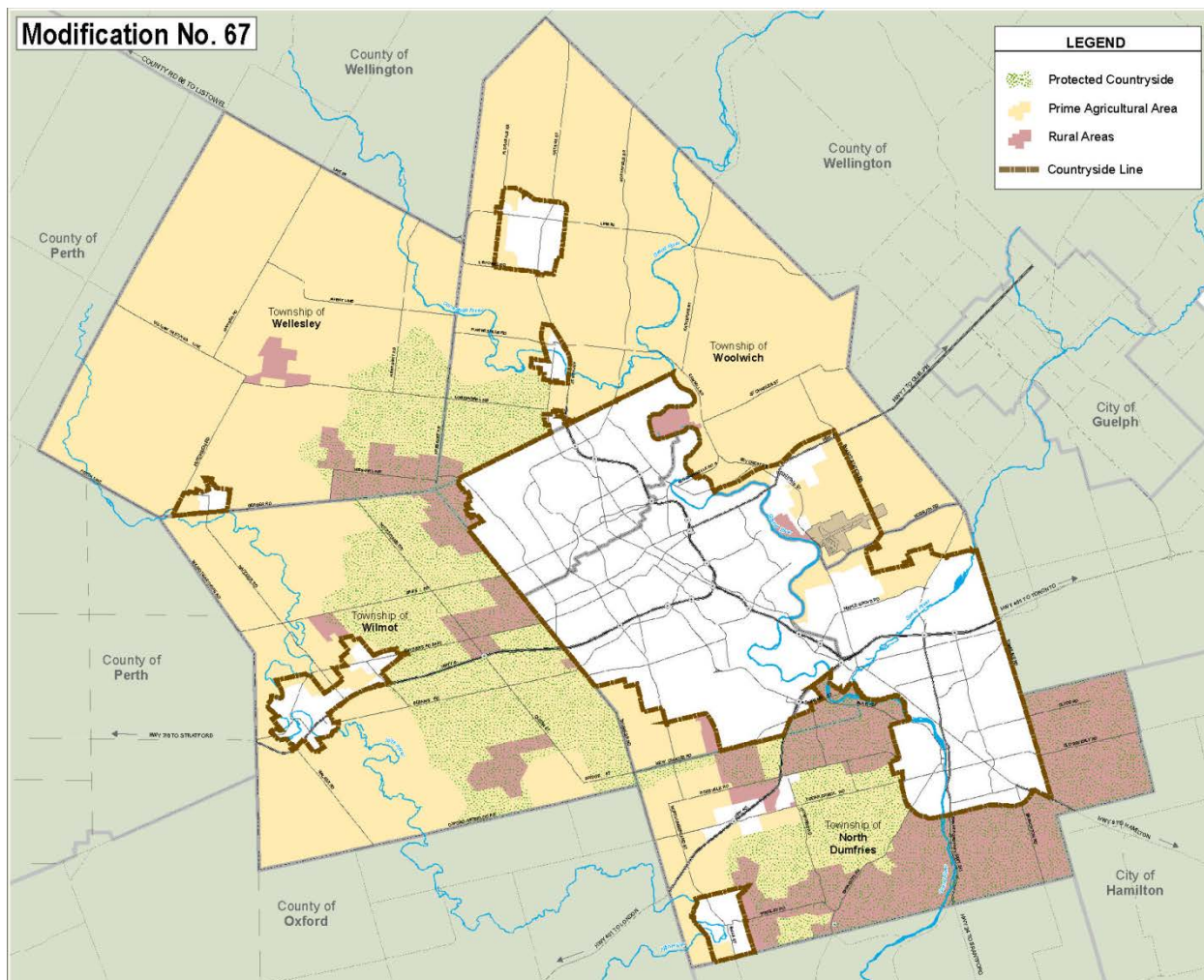[150] Region of Waterloo, "Regional Official Policies Plan Amendment No. 28: City Urban Area Expansion: East Side Phase One Employment Lands," 11.

[151] Region of Waterloo, "Region of Waterloo Land Budget," April 30, 2009, http://www.regionofwaterloo.ca/en/aboutTheEnvironment/resources/2009RegionofWaterlooLandBudget.pdf.

[152] Ibid.

found that no expansion was necessary within the 20-year life of the plan for residential or commercial purposes.[153][154]

The Region's land budget would thus translate the region's targets for intensification and density into a calculation to determine how much urban expansion would be allowed. The Region of Waterloo was alone in designing its land budget the way that it did. Most noticeably, the Region chose to immediately set higher targets for intensification and density than the minimums required by the province, and no other municipality in the Greater Golden Horseshoe chose to do the same.[155] But the targets were not the real innovation of the Region's land budget. The Region was the only municipality to design its own land budget based on the Growth Plan.[156]

The Growth Plan, as Kevin Eby explains, provided a set of rules to fundamentally change how land budgets were done. But the provincial government did not "get out ahead" and show municipalities how the Growth Plan envisioned that the new land budgets would work.[157] Regional planners asked if a new set of guidelines would be available to meet the new approach

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[153] Ibid., vi.

[154] This number would later be revised by the Region in 2012, during its defence of the ROP at the Ontario Municipal Board against a coalition of greenfield developers, as an early ruling determined that the horizon of the plan should run to 2031 instead of 2029. This revision process suggested that the urban area would need to be expanded by a modest 80 to 100 hectares by 2031. Kevin Eby, "Revised Regional Land Budget - Regional Official Plan Ontario Municipal Board Hearing (Phase 1)" (Region of Waterloo, June 6, 2012), 1–2, http://www.regionofwaterloo.ca/en/regionalGovernment/resources/CA2012-0606.pdf.

[155] Allen and Campsie, "Implementing the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe."

[156] Kevin Curtis, interview by author, Kitchener, ON; Kevin Eby, interview by author, Waterloo, ON.

[157] Kevin Eby, interview by author, Waterloo, ON.

to growth planning, but the government did not create new guidelines to replace the outdated method.[158] Facing a three-year deadline from the province to update their plans, the other municipalities covered by the Growth Plan began their land budgets using the 1995 methodology, which by then was out of print.[159] Without much guidance from the province, municipalities began to sort through the new challenge on their own.[160] As Eby describes, "In most cases, … they hired land economists, who took what they'd always done and slightly tweaked it to try and fit it into the Growth Plan."[161]

In contrast, the Region of Waterloo responded to the vacuum by creating its own methodology based on the Growth Plan. In writing a land budget closely aligned with the Growth Plan, the Region had benefitted from having Kevin Eby involved in writing the province's plan. The first land budget the Region had undertaken was based on a 2005 draft of the Growth Plan, and Eby's expertise meant that the Region was in a position, as he says, to "understand in intimate detail what was intended" by the Growth Plan, rather than just what it said.[162] The intention of the Growth Plan was to eliminate the old approach entirely, and to create a "new set of rules" that were premised on the intensification and density numbers.[163]

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[158] Kevin Curtis, interview by author, Kitchener, ON.

[159] Ibid.

[160] Kevin Eby, interview by author, Waterloo, ON.

[161] Ibid.

[162] Ibid.

[163] Ibid.

The result was that the Region's plan was integrally tied to its new land budget methodology. As Eby states, "We at the Region of Waterloo were the only ones in the entire province who did it precisely the way the Growth Plan says."[164][165]

The calculations of the land budget would be the basis for the Regional Official Plan. The land budget, the Protected Countryside, the Countryside Line, and a variety of other policies would come together in the ROP to bring legal effect to the Region's developing smart growth plans.

Overwhelmingly, as was the case with the RGMS,[166] landowners who approached regional council in the final days of the ROP work did not generally request that such policies not be enacted. Instead, they largely requested that their specific rural lands be included in current or future urban area development.[167] While some general policy comments were received

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[164] Ibid.

[165] Further evidence of the uniqueness of the Region's approach comes from an unlikely source: a lawyer for developers who would fight the Regional Official Plan at the Ontario Municipal Board. Robert Howe of Goodmans LLP wrote, "The absence of a housing-by-type analysis to assess further land needs in the Revised Land Budget renders it inconsistent with the land budget analyses undertaken for every other regional municipality in the Greater Golden Horseshoe. The Regions of Halton, Peel, Durham, York and Niagara all based their decisions regarding future residential land needs in their Growth Plan conformity exercises on analyses of demand for housing-by-type." Region of Waterloo, "Regional Council Minutes: Wednesday, June 6, 2012" (Region of Waterloo, June 6, 2012), 61, http://www.regionofwaterloo.ca/en/regionalGovernment/resources/CM2012-0606.pdf.

[166] Region of Waterloo, "Recommended Regional Growth Management Strategy Attachment 1: Communication and Consultation."

[167] See Region of Waterloo, "Special Council Meeting Consolidated Agenda: Tuesday, June 16, 2009" (Region of Waterloo, June 16, 2009), http://www.regionofwaterloo.ca/en/regionalGovernment/resources/CouncilMinutesJune162009.pdf.

from those representing developer or aggregate interests on the approach taken in the land budget and aggregate policies, most of the delegations or letter writers speaking regarding their property interests were focused on a specific property. Thus, while landowner interests were certainly at play in the approval of the ROP, those interests were primarily approached as individual proposals, not as a broader coalition of interests.[168]

Conclusion

The process that led from the Regional Growth Management Strategy through the light rail transit project and to the Regional Official Plan depended significantly on the new stronger footing upon which regional government found itself, and the leadership of a regional chair with a strong democratic mandate leading a council that largely embraced its new independence. Yet it was the ability to collaborate with area municipalities and build broad consensus over smart growth that put the Region in a position to significantly shape the provincial government's emerging smart growth policies.

The success built in Waterloo Region rested firmly on its two-tier government structure. Past disputes over regional government would still surface. The process was not simpler: regional planning had to engage politicians and staff in eight municipalities instead of one. But the eventual success of smart growth was much more solid because of the additional work that was required to create it, and the additional actors that would need to be brought on board. This

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[168] For example, it is evident from the minutes of the 2009 approval meeting that staff's opinion was sought after each delegation's proposal for property specific designation changes, and were thus being dealt with primarily as individual requests, not broad critiques. Region of Waterloo, "Regional Council Minutes: Tuesday, June 16, 2009."

solidity would be needed, as the Region would soon face two major challenges to its smart growth policies.

Learning from Tradition

In each of the three periods outlined above, municipal government and growth management have changed together, and have always done so under the watchful and sometimes irritatingly controlling eye of the provincial government. Part I of this dissertation has shown that the story of growth management in the Waterloo area is inseparable from its story of regional government. They have conditioned each other. Fragmented local government and fragmented planning in the Waterloo area brought both conflict and collaboration, which eventually led to regional government. The new upper-tier regional government negotiated its relationships with its new area municipal partners in part through development of its first Regional Official Policies Plan. Changes in the late 1990s that strengthened the Region but maintained strong area municipalities positioned the Region to pursue and implement strong smart growth policies in the 21st century. Waterloo Region's embrace of smart growth, and its support of provincial smart growth policies, has been built on regional relationships.

Part I can, in many ways, stand on its own to suggest a set of institutionalist lessons about smart growth in Waterloo Region. This research shows that understanding smart growth in Waterloo Region requires understanding its history of municipal government. This research also suggests that, while it can be tempting to examine growth management as a specific and isolated policy area, looking at specific policy issues in a jurisdiction over time, in the context of local government structures, can yield new insights on policy outcomes. Such research can also build on a rich literature on the history of local government reform in Ontario.

Yet in the context of the interpretive approach I set out in Chapter 2, Part I is the beginning of the story, rather than its end. This institutionally-oriented story is the backdrop. It is an outline of a broad tradition, the source of a set of initial beliefs which situated actors hold and modify as they encounter various dilemmas.

Part II examines the beliefs and actions of the 2010 to 2014 regional council as a group, by focusing on dilemmas. This was the council that would have to stand up to defend the smart growth policies that the Region of Waterloo had already embraced.

Part II: Dilemmas

Part I told the story of a particular tradition: the tradition of growth management and regional government in Waterloo Region. That account built on and fits well into the fruitful literature of institutionalist analyses in local and urban politics scholarship in Canada.

The tradition of regional government and growth management is one with which all members of regional council must contend, and within which they negotiate and change their own beliefs. To miss this historical tradition would be to miss a significant background tradition upon which regional councillors have developed their beliefs. Yet to understand their beliefs on smart growth and the actions they took as a result, that tradition is not enough. We must look at the beliefs that specific situated actors actually hold, and the actions they take.

In order to apply Bevir and Rhodes's insights to this case, I have to further individualize their approach. Bevir and Rhodes primarily use their approach to examine, as the title of their book suggests, governance stories.[1] They look at the practices of individuals and groups in order to examine broad concepts of governance and the state in their domestic political context and the way that they are enacted. The subject of their inquiry is varied stories of governance.

In contrast, the subject of my inquiry is a specific set of decisions made by a specific set of people in a specific moment. I want to understand why the 2010 to 2014 regional council defended the Region's smart growth plans. To apply Bevir and Rhodes's insights to this context, I must make two moves. First, to apply the insights of beliefs, actions, and dilemmas to the specific set of decisions in question, I must look at the beliefs and actions of regional council as a group. This requires telling a story about the general beliefs and actions of a group at a particular

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[1] Bevir and Rhodes, *Governance Stories*.

point in time. Second, I must individualize this analysis to examine the different traditions, beliefs and actions of specific individuals. This requires telling a story about each member of that council, the decisions they made, and the web of beliefs that informs them.

Part II, comprised of the following two chapters, accomplishes the first of these two moves. In it, I examine the beliefs and actions of council as a whole, by examining how regional council fought two specific challenges to the Region's smart growth plans. Chapter 6 looks at council's response to renewed pressure to cancel the region's light rail transit (LRT) project. Chapter 7 looks at council's response to a major ruling from the Ontario Municipal Board that undermined the Regional Official Plan and the province's Growth Plan. Both chapters examine these two challenges with respect to the dilemmas that council faced, or did not face, in defending these policies.

Part II, then, focuses on dilemmas. In Bevir and Rhodes's conception, "A dilemma arises for an individual or group when a new idea stands in opposition to existing beliefs or practices and so forces a reconsideration of the existing beliefs and associated tradition. Political scientists can explain change in traditions and practices, therefore, by referring to the relevant dilemmas."[2] In this instance, I wish to explain persistence rather than change. I examine how council was able to integrate new ideas and events in relation to its existing beliefs and practices while maintaining its commitment to these two major policy instruments.

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[2] Ibid., 9.

Chapter 6: Light Rail Transit

Introduction: Snapshot of a New Council

To hold on to a new idea, people must develop their existing beliefs to make room for it. The new idea will open ways of adjusting and close down others. People have to hook it on to their existing beliefs, and their existing beliefs will present some opportunities and not others. People can integrate a new belief into their existing beliefs only by relating themes to their existing understandings. Change thus involves a pushing and pulling of a dilemma and a tradition to bring them together.[1]

– Bevir and Rhodes, *Governance Stories*

If you had been sitting in the round council chambers of the Region of Waterloo on December 8, 2010, you would have seen 16 people being inaugurated as the new regional council.[2] Over the next four years, this council would defend two key aspects of the Region's smart growth planning: the Light Rail Transit (LRT) project, and the Regional Official Plan (ROP).

The LRT question hung over the council chambers on inauguration night. Since the original 2009 approval, both knowledge of and opposition to the project had grown. Coverage of the controversy had made the light rail transit project the hot topic of the 2010 municipal election. In the face of a fairly sudden and sustained backlash, most candidates had promised, one way or another, that the LRT decision would be revisited.[3]

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[1] Ibid., 11.

[2] Region of Waterloo, "Regional Council Minutes: Wednesday, December 8, 2010," December 8, 2010, http://www.regionofwaterloo.ca/en/regionalGovernment/resources/CC2010-1208.pdf.

[3] Jeff Outhit, "Feds Give Transit Plan $265M Total Funding Is Still $235M Short of the $800M Projected for a System with Trains," *Waterloo Region Record*, September 3, 2010, Final edition, sec. News; Jeff Outhit, "Candidates Beat up on Transit Plan," *Waterloo Region Record*, October 9, 2010, Final edition, sec. News.

In its subsequent coverage of the inauguration, the daily local paper would declare in its headline that "Buses are back on the table."[4] But veteran regional chair Ken Seiling, in his inaugural address, was firm in his support for LRT. "A failure to move forward will doom us," he proclaimed.[5] Urban sprawl and gridlocked traffic would be the future if this new council did not proceed with the project.

That night, the new council certainly saw the LRT fight coming. "[T]his will be a transformational council, one way or the other," Chair Seiling said.[6] He was right.

In this chapter, I show that three meaningful dilemmas arose for regional council in the 2010 to 2014 council term with respect to LRT: the money dilemma, the public opinion dilemma, and the regional dilemma. I then show how these three dilemmas were integrated into council's existing beliefs.

The Money Dilemma

The first major dilemma council faced on LRT was about money, and the decision to reconsider the LRT project must be understood in that light. During the 2010 election, many of the members of the new council had promised to revisit the decision to build LRT, and in January of 2011, council launched that review.[7] The review decision was seen by many to be

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[4] Jeff Outhit, "Buses Are Back on the Table; Regional Council Worries Cost of Light-Rail Plan Will Be Prohibitive," *Waterloo Region Record*, December 9, 2010, First edition, sec. News.

[5] Ken Seiling, "Light Rail: 'A Failure to Move Forward Will Doom Us,'" *Waterloo Region Record*, December 11, 2010, First edition, sec. Editorial.

[6] Outhit, "Buses Are Back on the Table; Regional Council Worries Cost of Light-Rail Plan Will Be Prohibitive."

[7] Region of Waterloo, "Regional Council Minutes: Wednesday, January 19, 2011," January 19, 2011, 12, http://www.regionofwaterloo.ca/en/regionalGovernment/resources/CM110119.pdf.

about the outrage expressed by some community members during the election. Those on the outside might have assumed, as a writer at the local paper did, that council's reconsideration of LRT was simply "bowing to the public outcry."[8] To some extent, they were. The sudden swell of displeasure in the public realm during the election was impossible to ignore.

But the review was as much about money as it was about public perception. The first week of September in 2010, at the height of the municipal election, the federal government announced that it would provide $265 million for the project.[9] With $300 million from the provincial government,[10] the remaining $235 million would remain a regional responsibility.[11]

This was something of a shock for local officials. In 2007,[12] the provincial government had promised to fund "up to two-thirds" of the project,[13] after initially offering to cover only one third.[14] The two-thirds promise was made during the 2007 provincial election, toward the

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[8] Jeff Outhit, "Fast Buses Back in the Mix; Rapid Transit Option Back on Table in about-Face by Regional Council," *Waterloo Region Record*, January 20, 2011, First edition, sec. News.

[9] Outhit, "Feds Give Transit Plan $265M Total Funding Is Still $235M Short of the $800M Projected for a System with Trains."

[10] Terry Pender, "Transit Group Lobbies Minister; If Toronto Doesn't Want Light-Rail Funds, Give Them to Waterloo Region, Lobbyist Urges," *Waterloo Region Record*, December 31, 2010, First edition, sec. Local.

[11] Outhit, "Feds Give Transit Plan $265M Total Funding Is Still $235M Short of the $800M Projected for a System with Trains."

[12] Tamsin McMahon, "Rapid Transit Plan Gets a Boost; Liberals Pledge to Pay Two-Thirds of Project's Cost," *Kitchener-Waterloo Record*, June 16, 2007, sec. Front.

[13] Brian Caldwell, "Rapid Transit Cash Falls Short $300M Commitment Far Less than Ontario Pledged in 2007," *Waterloo Region Record*, June 29, 2010, Final edition, sec. News.

[14] Tamsin McMahon, "Province Promises Millions for Region's Rapid-Transit System," *Kitchener-Waterloo Record*, March 23, 2007, sec. Front.

region's rapid transit system.[15] This was before the final decision had been made to pursue light rail as the transit technology. When the provincial government made that promise, two-thirds of the cost of bus rapid transit was estimated at $245 million: much less than would be needed for light rail.[16] But the final numbers were seen by many as a betrayal of provincial funding promises.[17]

There were those who had not supported LRT in 2009 and who did not believe in the project who had argued immediately upon receipt of the final provincial funding number in June of 2010 that buses should be used instead of light rail.[18] For them, the funding decision was a reason to cancel the project they did not support. Others who supported the project urged patience while everyone waited for the final numbers from the federal government.[19]

So just as many residents returned from the distractions of summer, just as the months-long municipal election campaign ramped up in earnest, the federal government funding announcement was made and the final numbers were known in the September before the October election. Just as those who had not been paying attention to the LRT project were learning of the controversy, the Region had certainty that a third of the costs would be borne by their

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[15] McMahon, "Rapid Transit Plan Gets a Boost; Liberals Pledge to Pay Two-Thirds of Project's Cost."

[16] Ibid.

[17] As The Waterloo Region Record paraphrased Minister John Milloy, member for Kitchener-Centre, at the time of the final provincial funding announcement, "cost estimates for the transit system have increase [sic] substantially and the province has been bruised by the recession." Caldwell, "Rapid Transit Cash Falls Short $300M Commitment Far Less than Ontario Pledged in 2007."

[18] Jeff Outhit, "Cheaper Buses Plan Back in Spotlight," *Waterloo Region Record*, July 13, 2010, Final edition, sec. Local.

[19] Ibid.

community directly. No one yet knew what this would look like. All the public had to go on was a local journalist's estimation of an 8.6% tax hike.[20] The timing could not have been worse. By early September, LRT had become the defining question of the municipal election, despite the fact that only one of the area's eight municipal councils would vote on it.[21]

Council would face a significant dilemma as a result of these events: despite support for the project, council did not know if and where it could find $235 million. These recent events had put regional council's belief in LRT in conflict with its belief in fiscal responsibility.

The money dilemma would be resolved by changes in the Region's funding approach. Unlike the sudden funding shortfall during the election, the review provided time for the costs to be considered in context, and for the financial burden to be seriously considered. On the night of the vote in favour of LRT in 2011, two councillors, also committee chairs, introduced separate motions to lessen concerns about the Region's portion of the project cost.[22] Councillor Wideman's motion involved allocating savings from the upcoming retirement of some major capital debts and the uploading of social service costs back to the province, in order to set the tax increase for LRT to 0.7% per year over seven years.[23] Councillor Strickland's motion aimed to

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[20] Outhit, "Feds Give Transit Plan $265M Total Funding Is Still $235M Short of the $800M Projected for a System with Trains."

[21] A number of area municipal councillors in Kitchener and Waterloo said that they had heard considerable concern about the project, particularly while knocking on doors, during the election campaign. Jeff Outhit, "Council Members Unsure about Rail Transit; City Councillors Say Voters Told Them They're Not Convinced by Plan," *Waterloo Region Record*, December 7, 2010, First edition, sec. News.

[22] Jeff Outhit, "Councillors Push Rail Rethink; Region Will Consider Route and Financial Suggestions before June 15 Vote on Transit Plan," *Waterloo Region Record*, June 8, 2011, First edition, sec. News.

[23] Region of Waterloo, "Regional Council Minutes: Wednesday, June 15, 2011," June 15, 2011, 10, http://www.regionofwaterloo.ca/en/regionalGovernment/resources/CM2011-0615.pdf.

address financial concerns by introducing options for private sector assumption of risk, moving that the Region "complete an evaluation of project procurement and delivery options, including the role of Infrastructure Ontario, with the goals of maximizing project innovation and quality, leveraging private sector expertise, and managing risks to the Region of Waterloo and our taxpayers."[24] Both motions were adopted.

These moves, collectively, allowed regional council to integrate the funding shortfall into its existing beliefs about the importance of LRT and fiscal prudence. The money dilemma was resolved: tax increases would be reduced, and options to protect "taxpayers" from risk would be pursued. The costs were not unmanageable, and council had taken visible steps to reduce them. The funding shortfall would not require council to alter its belief in LRT.

The Public Opinion Dilemma

The second major dilemma regional council faced on LRT was about public opinion. The dilemma was posed by the visible upswing in public outrage over the project during the 2010 election, which persisted until the 2011 decision to proceed with the project. In the area's two-tier system, it is rare for regional council to be the focus of considerable public attention and comment, as members of the public tend to focus on their area municipal representatives regardless of jurisdiction.[25] Yet during the election, members of regional council had gotten an earful.

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[24] Ibid., 11.

[25] City councillors hearing about the project during the election is an example of this phenomenon. Outhit, "Council Members Unsure about Rail Transit; City Councillors Say Voters Told Them They're Not Convinced by Plan."

The outcry posed a dilemma for council: how could it reconcile its beliefs about the importance of smart growth, the Region's growth management plans, and the LRT's role in them with the sudden and significant opposition it was facing? How could council reconcile its beliefs about smart growth with its beliefs about democracy?

This section shows that that regional council was able to see plenty of support for the project, and that who was supportive and the themes they invoked spoke to council's beliefs in smart growth.

In assessing levels of opposition to and support for the LRT project, the views council heard were different through different channels: informal feedback, public opinion polls, and formal feedback. Informal mechanisms like email and letters to the editor initially showed significant opposition to the project. Early in the review, in mid-April, some members of council indicated that the emails they were receiving showed overwhelming opposition.[26] One member noted that he had received ten emails in two days, and nine of them were against the project.[27]

By late May, however, as the crucial vote approached, it seemed as though the balance of emails had shifted, as supporters of the project urged council to proceed with LRT. One councillor reported that she was receiving slightly more emails in favour of the project than

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[26] Region of Waterloo, "Planning and Works Committee Minutes: April 12, 2011," April 12, 2011, 3, http://www.regionofwaterloo.ca/en/regionalGovernment/resources/PM2011-0412.pdf; Frances Barrick, "Councillors Still Trying to Gauge If There's Support for Light Rail Transit," *Waterloo Region Record*, April 15, 2011, First edition, sec. News.

[27] Barrick, "Councillors Still Trying to Gauge If There's Support for Light Rail Transit."

against it.[28] In his comments before the final June vote, another councillor stated that many of the emails he was receiving were supportive of the project.[29]

While only members of council could read their emails, a near constant barrage of letters to the editor in the Waterloo Region Record was perhaps the sign of public opinion most visible to the public itself.[30] These letters were perceived to show widespread opposition to the project. As Chair Ken Seiling explains,

> it was pretty obvious, when you take a look at the public response…if you judged support and opposition by letters to the editor of The Record, you'd say the bulk of people were opposed. But if you went on to social media and emails and the more modern means of communication, the support far outnumbered the opposition on that medium. So when you wrapped it all together, there was bigger support than there was opposition. But the perception in the public was, well, the majority of the letters to the editor are opposed, so, you know, that's the way it is.[31]

Thus, while the most visible letters to the editor suggested broad public displeasure with the project, members of council had balancing information in their email inboxes to show that many in the community supported the project.

In addition to these informal sources, three public opinion polls conducted by private groups also showed mixed opinions. The first poll was conducted at the behest of the Waterloo Region Record by Metroline Research Group in early May. While the Record has consistently

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[28] Terry Pender, "Light Rail Hinges on 3 Votes; Crucial Light-Rail Vote at Regional Council Hangs on the Decisions of Three Township Mayors," *Waterloo Region Record*, May 27, 2011, First edition, sec. News.

[29] Region of Waterloo, "Regional Council Minutes: Wednesday, June 15, 2011," June 15, 2011, 12.

[30] One private poll from a pro-LRT group would find that two thirds of respondents named the Record as a source from which they got their information on transit; it was by far the most mentioned source of transit information. Angus Reid Public Opinion, "Public Opinion of Waterloo Region Rapid Transit Proposal," May 2011, 13, http://machteldfaasxander.com/wp-content/uploads/2011/05/MFX_Waterloo-Region-LRT_May27.pdf.

[31] Ken Seiling, interview by author, Kitchener, ON.

declined to make the list of poll questions and detailed results public, they reported that "38 per cent of residents support trains, 32 per cent want rapid buses, and 30 per cent support road upgrades without rapid buses or trains."[32] As The Record noted, supporters interpreted the results as a strong majority in favour of some form of rapid transit, reducing the question to one of which technology should be used, while opponents argued that the majority were against trains.[33]

A second poll, paid for by LRT opponent group Taxpayers for Sensible Transit and conducted by Ipsos, was the only one to release its raw data by demographic categories. It found that a narrow majority of respondents indicated some level of support for the first phase of the project with LRT in Kitchener and Waterloo and adapted Bus Rapid Transit (aBRT) in Cambridge, while just under one third indicated some level of opposition to the project.[34] However, the poll included a follow-up question that said a 10.5% tax increase would be necessary, and support for the project dropped to 39%, while 48% said they were opposed.[35]

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[32] Jeff Outhit, "Mixed Views on Transit Poll," *Waterloo Region Record*, May 5, 2011, First edition, sec. News.

[33] Ibid.

[34] Support or opposition was determined by the following question: "Regional government's proposed plan is a combination of two separate technologies. It calls for electric trains on dedicated lanes in Kitchener and Waterloo, running between Conestoga Mall and Fairview Park Mall. Buses driving in mixed traffic with features to avoid congestion would run to the Ainslie Street terminal in Cambridge. To what extent do you support or oppose this plan in principle?" Ipsos Reid, "11-023852-01 - GRT Public Opinion Poll," May 25, 2011, 6, http://www.ipsos-na.com/download/pr.aspx?id=10759.

[35] Ipsos Reid, "Majority of Residents in Kitchener, Waterloo and Cambridge Strongly Support Referendum on Proposed LRT," *Ipsos*, May 25, 2011, http://www.ipsos-na.com/news-polls/pressrelease.aspx?id=5247.

A third poll, conducted by Angus Reid using a web forum and paid for by a pro-LRT creative design agency,[36] released all their questions along with detailed graphs and graphics.[37] They found that 58% of respondents chose an option that included LRT, and they reported that "72 percent of residents believe that the impact of LRT would be positive for the Region."[38]

Within all these duelling polls and the spin that their commissioners wanted to put on them, regional council was not confronted with a single narrative of public opinion. With data that could be seen to show both support and opposition, council did not have to modify its beliefs in response to these polls.

Finally, the most formal source of public opinion information was the Region's official consultation process, which showed strong support for LRT. Since regional staff were directed by council to do a review of the less expensive bus rapid transit (BRT) option,[39] comments submitted through the formal consultations focused on which specific implementation option should be chosen. Of the 10 options staff identified for the first phase of the review,[40] 78% of the comments supported rapid transit in some form, and 66% supported an option that included

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[36] Machteld Fass Xander, "Media Release: Angus Reid Poll Shows Majority Support LRT and Would Vote for pro-LRT Candidates in next Election," *Machteld Fass Xander*, May 27, 2011, http://machteldfaasxander.com/poll/.

[37] Angus Reid Public Opinion, "Public Opinion of Waterloo Region Rapid Transit Proposal."

[38] Machteld Fass Xander, "Media Release: Angus Reid Poll Shows Majority Support LRT and Would Vote for pro-LRT Candidates in next Election."

[39] Region of Waterloo, "Regional Council Minutes: Wednesday, January 19, 2011," 12.

[40] One option was to run LRT from north Waterloo all the way to south Cambridge; another was to do the same with separated lanes for rapid buses from St. Jacobs, north of Waterloo, to Ainslie.

LRT.[41] In the second consultation phase, after staff recommended the light rail transit/adapted Bus Rapid Transit option, 64% of the more than 1000 comments supported an LRT option.[42]

Formal delegation presentations to regional council on the subject showed similar numbers. Regional council held two special meetings in late May and early June of 2013, specifically to hear from delegations on the project.[43] Of the 101 delegations on these two consecutive evenings, staff reported that 61% supported LRT.[44] Formal feedback, based on the staff-led consultations and the delegations to council, was overwhelmingly in favour of rapid transit, and of LRT in particular.

The formal Region opportunities for input, then, suggested considerable support for LRT, at least among those significantly informed, engaged, and able to participate in the consultation process. When combined with competing polls, increasingly supportive emails, and negative letters to the editor, regional council could see substantial support for the project.

Yet beyond sheer volume, council had meaningful information about who, exactly, supported and opposed the project, and about what supporters and opponents were actually saying to support their positions. Both of these spoke to council's belief in smart growth.

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[41] Nancy Button and Thomas Schmidt, "Recommended Rapid Transit Implementation Option," Report to Council (Region of Waterloo, June 15, 2011), 10, http://www.rapidtransit.regionofwaterloo.ca/en/multimedialibrary/resources/rtimplementationoptionreport.pdf.

[42] Ibid.

[43] Region of Waterloo, "Public Input Meeting of the Planning and Works Committee - Rapid Transit Minutes: Wednesday, June 1, 2011," June 1, 2011, http://www.regionofwaterloo.ca/en/regionalGovernment/resources/PM2011-0601.pdf; ibid.

[44] Button and Schmidt, "Recommended Rapid Transit Implementation Option," 11.

First, the information available to council suggested that organized groups were overwhelmingly in favour of the project. At the three major 2011 meetings in which LRT delegations were heard,[45] there were 108 delegations. While the vast majority spoke as individuals (83), 11 represented businesses or business groups, 12 represented community groups, and 2 represented public sector groups. Of these 25 delegations, 19 (76%) took a clear position in favour of the project. Only 2 group delegations (8%) took a clear position against it, and both spoke on behalf of a group formed specifically to oppose the LRT project. In comparison, 53% of delegations speaking as individuals took a position in favour of the project, while 36% took a clear position against it.[46] Thus there was almost no one in the business or community sectors who had publically opposed the project, while there were many groups actively asking for it.

Specific groups also formed on both sides of the issue. In opposition to the project, the group Taxpayers for Sensible Transit (T4ST) began the same month LRT was initially approved in 2009.[47] In support of the project was the Tri-Cities Transport Action Group (TriTAG), also

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[45] Region of Waterloo, "Public Input Meeting of the Planning and Works Committee - Rapid Transit Minutes: Tuesday, May 31, 2011," May 31, 2011, http://www.regionofwaterloo.ca/en/regionalGovernment/resources/PM2011-0531.pdf; Region of Waterloo, "Public Input Meeting of the Planning and Works Committee - Rapid Transit Minutes: Wednesday, June 1, 2011"; Region of Waterloo, "Regional Council Minutes: Wednesday, June 15, 2011," June 15, 2011.

[46] This analysis is based on a subset of the data for an analysis I presented at the 2014 Canadian Political Science Association conference. For it, I qualitatively coded 180 delegation comments described in the regional council minutes from the seven major LRT meetings conducted between 2009 and 2014. Delegations were coded for themes, position, and whether the person speaking was doing so on behalf of some kind of group.

[47] Ruth Ellis Haworth, "Taxpayers for Sensible Transit," *Yappa Ding Ding*, June 6, 2009, http://yappadingding.blogspot.com/2009/06/taxpayers-for-sensible-transit.html.

founded in 2009 in the lead-up to the earlier LRT vote, which aims to support cycling, walking, and public transit.[48] Both groups had pages on their website to encourage community members to email regional council,[49] and they became the default voices that the local paper would use to seek comment from both sides of the issue.[50]

It is fair to say that pro-LRT groups were more successful at organizing their efforts than the anti-LRT group. TriTAG organized a rally of about 200 at the start of the 2010 council term in support of the project.[51] A second TriTAG rally just before the crucial vote in June 2011 drew about 250 supporters, while T4ST gathered about 20 people for a protest at the same location later in the day.[52]

Supportive groups also worked together. The most visible and effective efforts made by opponent group T4ST seemed to be individual, as they placed newspaper ads and commissioned their public opinion poll using donations from project opponents.[53] In contrast, behind the scenes, TriTAG teamed up with existing organizations and advocates to coordinate their efforts to support the project. As environmental advocate Kevin Thomason, who was involved in the

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[48] "About TriTAG," *TriTAG*, accessed October 16, 2016, http://www.tritag.ca/about/.

[49] Taxpayers for Sensible Transit, "How to Help," *Taxpayers for Sensible Transit*, June 11, 2011, https://web.archive.org/web/20110918142957/http://www.t4st.com/index.php?title=How_to_Help; TriTAG, "Light Rail Email," *TriTAG*, June 18, 2011, https://web.archive.org/web/20110618230847/http://www.tritag.ca/m/lrt/.

[50] See, for example, Outhit, "Mixed Views on Transit Poll."

[51] Melissa Tait, "Hundreds Rally for Light-Rail Transit; Issue Gets Boost in Waterloo ahead of Council Meeting," *Waterloo Region Record*, December 6, 2010, First edition, sec. News.

[52] Melissa Tait, "Both Sides of Transit Issue Rally to Persuade Council," *Waterloo Region Record*, June 13, 2011, First edition, sec. News.

[53] Terry Pender, "New Poll Shows Residents Balk at Transit Costs and Want a Say; Trains, Pains and Referendums," *Waterloo Region Record*, May 26, 2011, First edition, sec. News.

broader group, explains, to make sure council voted to continue with the project, "The challenge then became … who could we put around the table who would be interested in seeing this transit. So be it students, cycling groups, farmers, neighbourhood associations, developers in the core, whoever. Let's put them all around the table. The technology industry or whoever. And see somehow if we can get a group together."[54] The group focused on "education [and] information," by using "the media," community groups and meetings, and brochures.[55] The most visible example of their efforts was a pro-LRT flyer supported by a variety of listed groups including Communitech, The Waterloo Federation of Agriculture, TriTAG, the Grand River Environmental Network, the Waterloo Community Council, and Wonderful Waterloo, which encouraged community members to contact council about the project.[56] Thomason attributes council's continuing support for LRT in part to these efforts: "I can probably honestly say that if it wasn't for that group working to advocate and make it happen, we wouldn't have LRT happening now, because it came down to some pretty close votes and pretty close calls."[57]

So while specific groups were organizing both in support of and in opposition to LRT, existing and varied local groups were also involved in coordinated efforts in support of the project. While some of these efforts were less visible to council, these efforts contributed to council's sense that broad community support was behind the project. It was clear that most opposition came from individuals, while both individuals and community groups were asking for LRT.

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[54] Kevin Thomason, interview by author, Waterloo, ON.

[55] Ibid.

[56] Communitech et al., "What Does Light Rail Transit Mean to You?," 2011.

[57] Kevin Thomason, interview by author, Waterloo, ON.

Second, council was able to hear not just what position was being taken and who was taking it, by also the reasons they stated for their position. Supporters of the project invoked beliefs about smart growth, but opponents did not. Staff reported that the most common theme in the written comments of supporters in that last set of formal consultations focused on "future/children/grandchildren," thus invoking long-term community benefits from the project.[58] The analysis of 2011 delegation comments shows a similar trend. The most common broad theme among supporters of the project was vision, with 45% of supporters invoking it. The next most common themes, each covered by about a quarter of the supportive delegations, were environment, business or economic development, and urban sprawl. Thus supporters were addressing some of the major beliefs council held about reasons for supporting LRT. Supporters clearly spoke to the affordability question, as well, and addressed the money dilemma council also faced, with about a quarter of supportive delegations addressing the question of whether the project was affordable.

Opponent comments, in contrast, were overwhelmingly focused on expense. This was noted in the staff analysis of written consultation comments,[59] and in the 2011 delegation comments examined, nearly half of opponent delegations cited cost in describing their opposition to LRT. 38% mentioned the technology that had been chosen as part of their opposition. While 5 opponents (16%) mentioned issues around intensification and development, none addressed urban sprawl or the environment. Four opponents did mention business (13%), but half of those focused their comments focused on short-term construction challenges for businesses near the LRT route. Thus most opponents focused on the question of expense or the technology that

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[58] Button and Schmidt, "Recommended Rapid Transit Implementation Option," 10.

[59] Ibid.

should be chosen, while supporters focused on the long-term vision for the issues that had sparked the LRT in the first place: the environment, urban sprawl, and economic development.

Perhaps the closest opponents came to invoking beliefs council held was their call for a referendum.[60] Seven of the opponent delegations examined in 2011, or 22%, asked for a referendum. In so doing, they endeavoured to appeal to the importance of democracy and adherence to the will of the majority. Opponent group Taxpayers for Sensible Transit's poll explicitly asked, "To what extent do you agree or disagree that the Region of Waterloo should hold a referendum on its proposed light rail transit system before making a final decision?"[61] 83% indicated they were supportive of holding a referendum. A representative of Taxpayers for Sensible Transit said, "We need to hear from the people."[62]

But regional council rejected those calls and voted down a motion to hold a referendum. In explaining their vote against a referendum, a number of members cited their belief in representative government or their responsibility as members of regional council for making the decision.[63] There were more delegates in favour of LRT who stated their opposition to a

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[60] Jeff Outhit, "Transit Referendum Pitched; Two Regional Councillors Push for Public Vote on Rapid Transit," *Waterloo Region Record*, May 19, 2011, First edition, sec. News.

[61] Ipsos Reid, "11-023852-01 - GRT Public Opinion Poll," 9.

[62] Jeff Outhit, "Region to Debate Transit Referendum Request," *Waterloo Region Record*, May 25, 2011, First edition, sec. News.

[63] Region of Waterloo, "Regional Council Minutes: Wednesday, June 1, 2011," June 1, 2011, 3–4, http://www.regionofwaterloo.ca/en/regionalGovernment/resources/CM2011-0601.pdf.

referendum than there were LRT opponents who asked for one.[64] Efforts to mobilize council's beliefs about democracy to challenge council's belief in LRT were not effective.

Council had originally supported LRT largely due to its belief in the importance of smart growth for the environment, planning, and economic development. This belief was not considerably challenged by opponents, who did not speak at all to these issues. Established community groups were overwhelmingly in favour. And with adequate reason to believe individuals' opinions were at worst mixed, or even favourable, council's beliefs on smart growth and LRT did not have to change as a result of the dilemmas that had been posed over public opinion. The support council could see was adequate to integrate its beliefs about the importance of public opinion with its belief in the importance of LRT.

The Regional Dilemma

The third main dilemma regional council would face arose from its beliefs about regional government and the role of the area municipalities. While Waterloo and Kitchener councils engaged in different kinds of pushback against the Region's plan, neither city's position posed much of a dilemma for council. In contrast, pushback from the City of Cambridge significantly animated the dilemmas regional council faced on LRT.

Waterloo City Council focused its attention on particular implementation disputes that affected areas of the City's jurisdiction. A disagreement emerged between the mayor and the two other members of regional council representing the area over changes to routing in Uptown Waterloo. On the evening of the final 2011 vote, Waterloo regional councillor Sean Strickland introduced a motion to launch consultations on the possibility of revising the LRT route in

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[64] Eleven delegates opposed a referendum, while only 7 clearly asked for one. All 11 opposed were supporters of the LRT project, comprising 17% of delegates in support of LRT.

Uptown Waterloo, in response to concerns from members of the public about the routing that had

been approved two years earlier.[65] Waterloo's Mayor Halloran alone opposed the motion,

arguing that the City was concerned about interference with the city's new Waterloo Public

Square,[66] that Waterloo City Council wanted the route already established, and that the proposed

review "came as a complete surprise" to the city.[67] After another round of public consultation,[68]

Waterloo City Council eventually endorsed the Region's new recommended route while making

a number of recommendations for implementation to minimize the City's concerns about the

route.[69] Thus the City of Waterloo focused on how LRT would be implemented, not whether

LRT would be implemented.

Kitchener City Council tried to take a more active role in the decision to build LRT.

While transit was now a regional responsibility, Kitchener City Council encouraged community

members to direct their comments on LRT to city council. A month before the 2011 LRT vote,

Kitchener Council decided to hold a public input meeting in front of its own council in its own

chambers. The only member of council opposed to the decision was Kitchener's mayor, Carl

Zehr, who was the sole member of Kitchener's council who also sat on regional council. Zehr

argued that inviting members of the public to present at a council that would not be making the

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[65] Region of Waterloo, "Regional Council Minutes: Wednesday, June 15, 2011," June 15, 2011, 10–11.

[66] Ibid., 10.

[67] Jeff Outhit, "Rail Plan Passes; Regional Council Votes 9-2 in Support of 'Transformational' Rapid Transit," *Waterloo Region Record*, June 16, 2011, First edition, sec. News.

[68] Jeff Outhit, "Waterloo Ponders Train Routes," *Waterloo Region Record*, September 28, 2011, First edition, sec. Local.

[69] Paige Desmond, "Council Grudgingly Endorses Uptown LRT Route," *Waterloo Chronicle*, November 9, 2011, http://www.therecord.com/news-story/5889416-council-grudgingly-endorses-uptown-lrt-route/.

LRT decision would create unnecessary confusion.[70] That same day, Kitchener's council voted to ask the Region to hold a referendum on the LRT project; Zehr left the room during the vote, as he felt it would be inappropriate for him to participate.[71] As a columnist summarized, Zehr "says he doesn't feel bound by the city council decision, though he will communicate the council's wishes to regional council."[72] Kitchener City Council thus took noticeable steps to involve itself in the Region's LRT decision.

Neither of these conflicts produced significant dilemmas for regional council on the LRT question. In Waterloo's case, the disagreement about routing and consultation with the city was fairly standard in the history of back-and-forth between the regional municipality and area municipalities. In Kitchener's case, while Kitchener City Council listened to its own delegations and called on the Region to hold a referendum, it did not significantly challenge regional council's actual decision, and their sole dual member did not support their approach to dealing with the Region's issue.

In contrast, reaction from the City of Cambridge did emerge as a significant dilemma for regional council in the LRT debate. For its part, Cambridge City Council was significantly displeased with the project in its proposed form, since Cambridge would not receive trains in the first, and only funded, phase of the project. Cambridge had commissioned its own report to

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[70] Terry Pender, "Kitchener Seeks Transit Input; Councillors Vote to Hear Residents on Region's LRT Plans," *Waterloo Region Record*, May 10, 2011, First edition, sec. News.

[71] Luisa D'Amato, "Will There Be a Referendum?," *Waterloo Region Record*, May 28, 2011, First edition, sec. News.

[72] Ibid.

oppose LRT during the 2009 rapid transit decision.[73] In May of 2011, Cambridge Council passed a unanimous motion opposing the Region's proposed LRT stage 1 plan. Cambridge Council declared "THAT the Cambridge City Council and the residents of the City of Cambridge are not prepared to support the Light Rail Transit (LRT) as it is currently being proposed by the Council of the Region of Waterloo; AND THAT the current LRT proposal will only benefit the Cities of Kitchener and Waterloo, with the City of Cambridge receiving no benefit from the proposed transit system."[74] They also voted to ask the Region to put the proposal to a referendum. [75]

The challenge from Cambridge invoked the long history of displeasure about the Region from both residents and representatives of Cambridge. In taking a position against the Region's project, Cambridge Council was asserting its right to represent Cambridge residents, and to protest their ongoing mistreatment by regional government.

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[73] Outhit, "Cambridge Report Boosts Buses; As Region's Vote on Rapid Transit Nears, Conflicting Reports Are Tabled."

[74] City of Cambridge, "Minutes: City of Cambridge Special Council Meeting," May 3, 2011, 2, City of Cambridge website, http://www.cambridge.ca/cs_pubaccess/download.php?doc_id=5929.

[75] Kevin Swayze, "Cambridge Council Wants Referendum on Rapid Transit," *Waterloo Region Record*, May 31, 2011, First edition, sec. News.
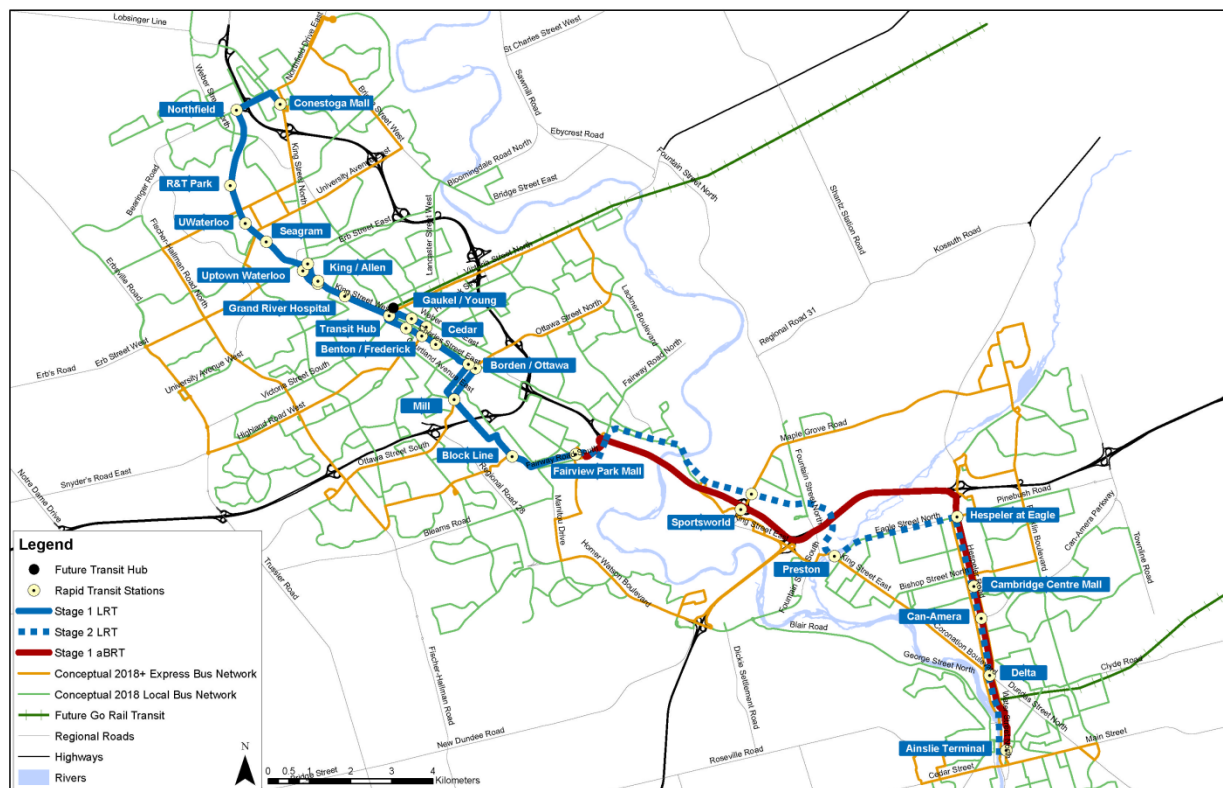
Figure 5: The Phase 1 route, with light rail transit in solid blue and adapted bus rapid transit in red, from 2012. A potential route for Phase 2 LRT is visible as a blue dashed line. Source: Corporate Services, Information Technology Services, Region of Waterloo. Copyright: Region of Waterloo. Used with permission.

Regional council did not give up on the phased LRT project because of concerns from Cambridge City Council. The 2011 vote to proceed with the project was opposed by the only member of council representing Cambridge who was able to vote that night,[76] but broad support from members across other areas of the region meant the plan was approved once again.[77]

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[76] Mayor Doug Craig had to declare a pecuniary interest on LRT because one of his children owned property along the line, while Cambridge councillor Jane Brewer was in a car crash just weeks before the meeting that kept her from participating. Frances Barrick, "Region Chair, Cambridge Mayor Bow out of Transit Votes," *Waterloo Region Record*, April 13, 2011, First edition, sec. News; "Local Politician Hurt in Crash; Jane Brewer Is in Hospital after Head-on Collision," *Waterloo Region Record*, May 4, 2011, First edition, sec. Local.

[77] Region of Waterloo, "Regional Council Minutes: Wednesday, June 15, 2011," June 15, 2011, 15.

Despite the approval, the conflict over Cambridge's role in the region and its exclusion from the first phase of LRT would continue to permeate the rest of the council's term, particularly in its last year.[78] In March of 2014,[79] Mayor Craig of Cambridge made a final push to exclude Cambridge residents from paying for the project, and put forward a motion to exempt Cambridge residents from paying for LRT, and exempting Kitchener and Waterloo residents

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[78] This late resurgence could mostly be attributed to the return to the LRT debates of Mayor Doug Craig in August of 2013, after he secured a court ruling to clear him from any potential conflict of interest on LRT based on his son's ownership of property near the rapid transit line. Paige Desmond, "Cambridge Mayor Back in Rapid Transit Debate," *Waterloo Region Record*, August 20, 2013, First edition, sec. News. Upon his return to the issue, Craig promptly requested a report on the cost of cancelling LRT, but could not summon enough support to pass his motion. Paige Desmond, "Mayor Craig Wants to See Cost Report on Scrapping Light Rail," *Waterloo Region Record*, August 21, 2013, First edition, sec. News; Paige Desmond, "Cost to Scrap LRT Remains Unknown; Mayor Craig Says Public Needs the Information,but Coun. Strickland Says Time for Talking Is over," *Waterloo Region Record*, September 19, 2013, First edition, sec. Local. Chair Ken Seiling, who had also declared a pecuniary interest due to property owned by his children, would reenter the debate in January of 2014. Brent Davis, "Seiling Will No Longer Declare Conflict on LRT," *Waterloo Region Record*, January 8, 2014, First edition, sec. News. Councillor Tom Galloway had declared a conflict on the 2011 vote as it was a decision that would bring the LRT route close to his employer, the University of Waterloo, but he rejoined the debate shortly thereafter. Paige Desmond, "Conflict over Conflict Ruling; Regional Councillor Doesn't Think Cambridge Mayor Should Enter Transit Debate, despite Court Decision," *Waterloo Region Record*, August 30, 2013, First edition, sec. Local. Mayor Rob Deutschmann's law firm owns a property next to the LRT route, and he continued to declare a conflict throughout the entire four-year council term on the LRT project. Jeff Outhit, "Township Mayor Declares Rapid Transit Conflict," *Waterloo Region Record*, February 19, 2011, First edition, sec. Local; Paige Desmond, "Region Votes 11-4 to Award LRT Contract," *Waterloo Region Record*, March 4, 2014, sec. News.

[79] Region of Waterloo, "Regional Council Minutes: Wednesday, March 19, 2014" (Region of Waterloo, March 19, 2014), http://regionofwaterloo.ca/en/regionalGovernment/resources/CM2014-0319.pdf.

from paying for adapted Bus Rapid Transit (aBRT) in Cambridge.[80] In supporting his motion, Craig argued that Cambridge should receive the same sort of treatment on LRT as the townships receive on transit: the townships do not receive transit services, so they do not pay for the transit portion of the tax levy.[81]

The discussion itself seemed to violate council's beliefs about regional government. A number of members would describe the conversation at that meeting as divisive.[82] Chair Seiling would unveil a long list of services for which taxpayers in other parts of the Region subsidize Cambridge residents.[83] Mayor Craig would describe that discussion as a "red herring" being used

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[80] Region of Waterloo, "Consolidated Council Agenda: Wednesday, March 19, 2014," March 19, 2014, 4, http://www.regionofwaterloo.ca/en/regionalGovernment/resources/CA2014-0319.pdf.

[81] More specifically, the townships have not traditionally received transit service. Since Grand River Transit (GRT) was established, however, they launched a pilot service of transit through St. Jacobs and to Elmira in Woolwich from North Waterloo, and the costs of that now permanent bus route are paid for by Woolwich residents. Frances Barrick, "Elmira-Waterloo Bus Route Now Permanent," *Waterloo Region Record*, October 19, 2011, http://www.therecord.com/news-story/2588459-elmira-waterloo-bus-route-now-permanent/. More recently a pilot project to extend a bus route to Baden and New Hamburg in Wilmot was funded by the provincial government, and made permanent using the same arrangement. Scott Miller Cressman, "Wilmot Votes to Keep New Route 77 Bus," *New Hamburg Independent*, December 13, 2016, https://www.newhamburgindependent.ca/news-story/7017995-wilmot-votes-to-keep-new-route-77-bus/. It is not clear if these changes to transit service may encourage the question of the township area rating to be reopened. The only other service that is area rated on the regional property tax bill is the regional rural library service. Region of Waterloo, "Budget Committee Minutes: Wednesday, October 21, 2015," October 21, 2015, 15, http://www.regionofwaterloo.ca/en/regionalGovernment/resources/Budget/C22015-1021.pdf.

[82] Region of Waterloo, *Regional Council - March 19, 2014* (Kitchener, ON, 2014), http://view.earthchannel.com/PlayerController.aspx?&PGD=waterlooonca&eID=162.

[83] Region of Waterloo, "Regional Council Minutes: Wednesday, March 19, 2014," 38–43.

to distract from the question of area rating of transit.[84] There was broad agreement among those participating in the vote, on both sides, that this kind of discussion, and its ensuing divisiveness, was highly unusual around the regional council table. Five members would refer in some fashion to "the regional family," [85] implying that the tradition of regional government and the relationships between its municipalities were at issue that night.

The motion would fail; only the motion's mover and seconder, both from Cambridge, would support it.[86] But unlike the smaller challenges from the cities of Waterloo and Kitchener, the decision to proceed with LRT over Cambridge's objections, and to continue to include Cambridge taxpayers, incurred a meaningful cost. It was the cost of opening old wounds from past fights about regional relationships.

In the end, the dilemma council faced as a result of objections from Cambridge were not fatal to its support for LRT, including its second phase to Cambridge. In voting against Craig's motion, many members argued that preventing Cambridge from paying for LRT would ensure that the LRT was never extended to Cambridge, as Cambridge residents could not afford to pay for Phase 2 without Kitchener and Waterloo taxes.[87] Thus council decided in favour of its long-term vision for LRT, and even defending Cambridge's eventual inclusion in the project. Council would find room for Cambridge's objections within its beliefs about the role and operation of the regional family. Thus regional council's belief in the Region's legitimate role and the importance of its smart growth plans were not successfully disrupted by continuing discord over

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[84] Region of Waterloo, *Regional Council - March 19, 2014*.

[85] Ibid.

[86] Region of Waterloo, "Regional Council Minutes: Wednesday, March 19, 2014," 8.

[87] Region of Waterloo, *Regional Council - March 19, 2014*.

Cambridge's place in the Region. The dilemma was resolved by accepting the cost of deepening those divisions.

Conclusion

Amidst the public roar over LRT, council faced three main dilemmas: about money, about public opinion, and about relational relationships. All three were resolved in a way that allowed council to fit the challenge into its existing beliefs. The financial burden on the Region was lessened, council heard considerable support for the project, and council decided the long-term vision of the project was worth Cambridge's outrage. All three developments allowed council to continue to believe in LRT and act accordingly, despite the dilemmas they faced.

The 2011 decision to approve the project[88] was hardly the last decision this council would have to make on LRT: they would choose to purchase trains,[89] to build the project using a form of public-private partnership with a private consortium to design, build, finance, operate, and maintain the system, [90] and to award the contract to the consortium that won the bidding process.[91] Each of these decisions would be an opportunity for opponents to try to stop the project, and for proponents to try to fight them off. But council continued with the basic direction

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[88] Region of Waterloo, "Regional Council Minutes: Wednesday, June 15, 2011," June 15, 2011.

[89] Region of Waterloo, "Regional Council Minutes: Wednesday, June 27, 2012," June 27, 2012, http://www.regionofwaterloo.ca/en/regionalGovernment/resources/CM2012-0627.pdf.

[90] Region of Waterloo, "Special Meeting of the Planning and Works Committee Minutes: Tuesday, February 7, 2012," February 7, 2012, http://www.regionofwaterloo.ca/en/regionalGovernment/resources/PM2012-0207.pdf; Region of Waterloo, "Regional Council Minutes: Wednesday, February 8, 2012," February 8, 2012, http://www.regionofwaterloo.ca/en/regionalGovernment/resources/CM2012-0208.pdf.

[91] Region of Waterloo, "Planning and Works Committee Minutes: Tuesday, March 4, 2014"; Region of Waterloo, "Regional Council Minutes: Wednesday, March 19, 2014."

it had set in June of 2011. Dilemmas were faced and new beliefs accommodated without challenging council's overall belief in LRT and the importance of pursuing it.

Fights over LRT did not end with the regional council term. By 2014, it was clear that the 2014 election, much like the 2010 election, would largely be about LRT. Chair Seiling faced what was perhaps his first visibly serious challenger in Jay Aissa, owner of a local fencing business who opposed LRT. Aissa was the only named individual behind the stoplightrail.ca petition started early in the election year.[92]After losing a court challenge[93] for an injunction to block the LRT project in March and dropping his subsequent request for a judicial review,[94] Aissa positioned himself as the anti-LRT option in the regional chair's race.[95] Other anti-LRT candidates would run for regional council seats at other levels. Yet all but one of the members of

[92] Paige Desmond, "Politicians Awash in LRT Mail," *Waterloo Region Record*, February 13, 2014, sec. News.

[93] In his challenge, Aissa argued that the LRT project was not in conformity with the Region's official plan, since the most recent plan was still under appeal. He apparently missed Amendment 26 to the previous plan, adopted and in force since 2007, which provided for the rapid transit project. Paige Desmond, "Aissa LRT Challenge Looms as Contract Award Is Finalized," *Waterloo Region Record*, June 6, 2014, sec. News, http://global.factiva.com/redir/default.aspx?P=sa&an=TKWR000020140606ea660006y&cat=a&ep=ASE; Region of Waterloo, "Regional Official Policies Plan Amendment No. 26: Introduction of New Transit and Rapid Transit Policies and Mapping."

[94] Paige Desmond, "Judge Dismisses Bid to Stop Waterloo Region LRT Project," *Waterloo Region Record*, March 18, 2014, sec. News; "LRT Legal Challenge Dropped," *Waterloo Region Record*, June 20, 2014, sec. News.

[95] Brent Davis, "Aissa Planning Run for Regional Chair after Oberholtzer Withdraws from Race," *Waterloo Region Record*, July 16, 2014, sec. News; "Jay Aissa Running for Regional Chair," *Waterloo Region Record*, September 6, 2014, First edition, sec. Local.

council who ran again in 2014 was re-elected.[96] No seats were filled with new members who wanted to cancel the project.[97] The project is currently being built by the Grandlinq consortium, and service is scheduled to begin in early 2018.

This was how regional council defended its light rail transit project, and the vision for smart growth that it supported. But this regional council would face another serious challenge to its smart growth plans. And unlike the debate over LRT, they would not see this one coming.

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[96] The only regional councillor to lose his re-election bid was Mayor Todd Cowan of Woolwich, who was facing an investigation by the Ontario Provincial Police over double-billing the Region, township, and Grand River Conservation Authority over expense claims. Paige Desmond, "OPP Investigating Woolwich Mayor Todd Cowan over Expenses," *Waterloo Region Record*, October 2, 2014, sec. News; Brian Caldwell, "New Faces, Same Course in Waterloo Region Municipal Election," *Waterloo Region Record*, October 28, 2014, sec. News. Cowan was charged with fraud and breach of trust within months of the election. "Former Woolwich Mayor Todd Cowan Charged with Fraud," *Waterloo Region Record*, February 6, 2015, sec. News. He was found guilty of breach of trust and sentenced to probation and community service. Ryan Flanagan, "Todd Cowan Sentenced to Probation, Community Service," *CTV Kitchener*, July 18, 2016, http://kitchener.ctvnews.ca/todd-cowan-sentenced-to-probation-community-service-1.2991353.

[97] Paige Desmond, "Seiling Victorious after Tense Waterloo Region Chair Election Race," *Waterloo Region Record*, October 27, 2014, sec. News.

Chapter 7: The Regional Official Plan

Introduction

The 2010 to 2014 council knew from the start of its term that LRT would be a fight. But it did not know that that the Regional Official Plan, too, would face an unexpectedly serious threat during council's time in office. While the LRT had created dilemmas over deeply held beliefs of council that had to be resolved, the threats to the Regional Official Plan did not.

In this chapter, I show that the challenges posed by developers through their appeal, and by the Ontario Municipal Board (OMB) in its ruling, did not significantly challenge the beliefs council held. Council generally believed in its plan, and would be given several good reasons to maintain those beliefs in light of the OMB decision.

I begin by examining how first greenfield developers and then the Ontario Municipal Board challenged the Regional Official Plan. I then examine five factors that reinforced council's support for the Regional Official Plan, which prevented the formation of meaningful dilemmas. I conclude by explaining how the issue was resolved.

Challenges from the Development Industry

The development industry's challenge to the Regional Official Plan did not create a dilemma for regional council. Their appeals took two primary forms. First, just as requests over specific pieces of land had dominated discussion of regional growth planning for decades, there were a number of appeals based only on the inclusion or exclusion of a particular property in a particular category. Nine of the 26 appeals were from landowners who wanted their property included in the Urban Area or excluded from the Protected Countryside or Core Environmental

or Regional Recharge Area designations.[1] These arguments were not new to council, and were largely to be expected.

Second, and more significantly, some developers did try to challenge the basic smart growth premises of the Regional Official Plan. For example, four different corporations[2] represented by the same law firm appealed:

(a) the methodology used by the Region to prepare the Regional Land Budget exercise;
(b) the growth management policies respecting the Countyside, Countyside Line, Protected Countyside and associated mapping;
(c) Regional Recharge Area designation and policies and the delineation of the wellhead protection area;
(d) Greenlands Network policies and mapping; and
(e) any other policies impeding the development of their lands.[3]

Others represented by the same firm appealed "(a) the methodology used by the Region to prepare the Regional Land Budget exercise; (b) the growth management policies; (c) any other policies which appear to predetermine the location for growth," sometimes along with a specific designation on their own lands.[4] In all, nine different appeals were filed challenging the broad concepts of the Region's plans, focusing on its land budget and restrictions placed on where development would happen.[5] This meant that the entire Regional Official Plan was appealed.[6]

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[1] Region of Waterloo, "Regional Official Plan," December 22, 2010, i–v.

[2] These were two numbered corporations and Activa Holdings Inc. and Stonefield Properties Corp, all of which were being represented by Goodmans LLP.

[3] Region of Waterloo, "Regional Official Plan," December 22, 2010, ii.

[4] Ibid., iv.

[5] In addition to nine property-specific appeals, nine broad appeals, and the appeals from the two municipalities, there were three appeals that challenged the broad principles but tied them explicitly to the appellant's specific property interests, and one that was unclear about whether the appellant's property was involved

These sweeping appeals, one might say, were from the usual suspects. The nine appeals challenging the Region's smart growth approach in its entirety were from nine corporations, including three numbered corporations, as well as six significant names in the local development industry: Mattamy Development Corporation, Activa Holdings Inc., Stonefield Properties Corp., Northgate Land Corp., Hallman Construction, and Gatestone Development Corp.[7]

These appeals did not produce a meaningful dilemma for regional council. During the first two years of the council term, the most active decision that council faced in defending its plan was the choice to stick with its land budget. As a result of an early decision in the appeal process that changed the time horizon of the plan to 2031 from 2029,[8] the Region revised its land budget in 2012 to account for two more years' growth in people and jobs,[9] and determined that under their land budget methodology 80 to 100 hectares of additional land would be needed for residential development to 2031.[10]

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in its challenge of the Protected Countryside and Regional Recharge Areas. There were two other appeals on two other issues: one from the Ontario Stone, Sand & Gravel Association challenging "mineral resource" requirements, and one from two individuals regarding regional rules on "conversion of rental affordable housing to condominium ownership." Ibid., i–v.

[6] Ontario Municipal Board, "Decision Delivered by N. C. Jackson and Order of the Board," February 3, 2012, 6, http://www.omb.gov.on.ca/e-decisions/pl110080-Feb-03-2012.pdf.

[7] Region of Waterloo, "Regional Official Plan," December 22, 2010, i–iv.

[8] Ontario Municipal Board, "Decision Delivered by N. C. Jackson and Order of the Board."

[9] Eby, "Revised Regional Land Budget - Regional Official Plan Ontario Municipal Board Hearing (Phase 1)."

[10] Ibid., 2.

At the same time, in 2012, Activa submitted its own land budget based on work by consultants Altus Group and MHBC.[11] They argued that 1298 hectares would be required for greenfield residential growth to 2031.[12] The developers' land budget was shared with the Region in April of 2012.[13] Regional council was presented with the developers' land budget at the same time as they examined the Region's revised land budget, in the weeks leading up to the OMB hearing on the land budget.[14]

With this new land budget, the developers were mounting four particularly noteworthy challenges to the Regional Official Plan. All four are fairly technical, but taken together they outline the extent to which the developers sought to weaken the Region's smart growth planning.

First, the developers' land budget challenged the shift in housing types contemplated by the Growth Plan and enshrined in the Region's official plan. The developers' land budget was based on a housing-by-type based methodology from 1995, entitled *Projection Methodology Guideline: a Guide to Projecting Population, Housing Need, Employment and Related Land Requirements.* The developers argued that "The Revised Land Budget does not consider the Region's actual land needs to accommodate an appropriate range and mix of housing to serve forecast growth."[15] As described in Part I, the Region's key staff members argued that the Growth Plan was designed to replace this methodology and to challenge the sprawling urban form that had developed in previous eras.

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[11] Ibid., 47–105.

[12] Ibid., 66.

[13] Ibid., 4.

[14] Eby, "Revised Regional Land Budget - Regional Official Plan Ontario Municipal Board Hearing (Phase 1)."

[15] Region of Waterloo, "Regional Council Minutes: Wednesday, June 6, 2012," 60.

Second, the developers challenged the idea that the provincial Growth Plan actually required density targets to be achieved at all. The Region argued that the 50 people and jobs per hectare in greenfield areas would actually have to be achieved by 2031, in accordance with the province's Growth Plan.[16] But using its housing-by-type approach, the developers' land budget would require that additional lands be designated for urban expansion by 2031 to build more low-density housing.[17] Because the developers' land budget was based on historical building patterns, it assumed that market demand requires 60% of new housing to be in the form of single and semi-detached houses.[18] But the higher density housing, such as apartments, would not actually be required or built by 2031.[19] Since these higher-density units are part of the minimum density calculation, the designated greenfield areas under the developers' land budget would not actually meet the minimum density requirements of the Growth Plan during the life of the plan.[20]

Third, the developers challenged the Region's assessment that the housing preferences of seniors are shifting. The Region had argued that research showed that seniors' preferences around housing were changing from what they were in the 1980s and 1990s, when ideas about "aging in place" had taken hold.[21] The Region noted that seniors today contend with larger homes, more car dependent suburbs, less interaction with neighbours, longer life expectancies,

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[16] Eby, "Revised Regional Land Budget - Regional Official Plan Ontario Municipal Board Hearing (Phase 1)," 5.

[17] Ibid.

[18] Ibid., 55.

[19] Ibid., 5.

[20] Kevin Eby, "Reply to the Witness Statements of Jeanette Gillezeau, Peter Norman, Paul Britton, Dan Currie, Audrey Jacobs, Paul Lowes and John Genest," July 4, 2012, 37.

[21] Kevin Eby, "Witness Statement of Kevin Eby," June 15, 2012, 72.

and new options for denser housing in their neighbourhoods. The Region's research found a relationship between turnover of seniors' housing and the era in which it was built, with newer, larger homes being recycled to other residents at a higher rate than older, smaller postwar properties.[22]

With the large percentage of newer, larger homes in the existing housing stock, the Region concluded that there was evidence to suggest that housing choices of seniors in the older model could not be taken for granted. They argued that the Region's land budget methodology was flexible enough to respond to different future possibilities as part of the five year review cycle, but that the housing-by-type analysis in the developers' land budget was too rigid to do so,[23] and depended too heavily on past trends, the continuing presence of which cannot be assumed.[24] The developers argued that seniors would continue to age in place, and that the housing choices of seniors would not change significantly,[25] so their homes would not be available to accommodate younger families, and thus more ground-oriented housing would be needed.

Fourth, the developers challenged the Region's use of only the provincially mandated exclusions from the density calculations. These exclusions, commonly known as "takeouts," are areas that cannot or will not be built on within expansion lands, and that the Growth Plan says are excluded from the density calculation. Lands that are not counted as takeouts but that cannot be built on are still included in the density calculation. This requires the people and jobs per

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[22] Ibid., 77–78.

[23] Ibid., 72–79.

[24] Ibid., 82.

[25] Ontario Municipal Board, "Decision Delivered by Steven Stefanko and Joseph Sniezek and Order of the Board," 14.

hectare that would have been accommodated within them to be accommodated elsewhere, leading to higher densities on the portion of land that will be built.

The Region highlighted that the developers' land budget excluded lands from the minimum density calculation that the Growth Plan did not allow to be excluded.[26] The Region's position was that the developers' list of additional exclusions did not meet the requirements of the Growth Plan, since the province's list of takeouts was exhaustive.[27] The result of allowing the additional exclusions requested by the developers would be to lower the densities required on parcels upon which building is allowed to occur,[28] requiring that additional lands be designated for development. Staff estimated that using the developers' takeouts would require designating additional lands equivalent to 10 average-sized farms.[29]

These arguments are fairly technical in nature. Regional council, as a body of elected officials, did not need an in-depth understanding of each technical aspect of the land budgets. Council did, however, need to believe that regional staff's land budget was important to its smart growth approach and the Growth Plan, and to believe that the developers' land budget approach was a challenge to council's smart growth planning. The summary of the report council reviewed regarding the Region's revised land budget and the developers' land budget clearly highlighted

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[26] Eby, "Revised Regional Land Budget - Regional Official Plan Ontario Municipal Board Hearing (Phase 1)," 5.

[27] Eby, "Witness Statement of Kevin Eby," 87.

[28] Ibid., 30–31.

[29] Eby, "Revised Regional Land Budget - Regional Official Plan Ontario Municipal Board Hearing (Phase 1)," 6.

that the developers' land budget sought a residential urban area expansion of 1,298 hectares,[30]

and that regional staff had determined that only 80 to 100 hectares would be needed. Staff

highlighted that it had "reviewed the alternative land budget and does not support either its

methodology or it conclusions."[31]

Council voted to proceed at the hearing with the Region's revised land budget.[32] It would

not seem that council faced much of a dilemma in doing so. Greenfield developers with an

interest in urban expansion for single-detached homes were fighting to be allowed to do things

the old way. Council had embraced a new way. So had the provincial government with its

Growth Plan. The Regional Official Plan, supported by its land budget, was necessary for smart

growth and conformed to provincial policy. Council did not have to meaningfully revise its

beliefs to respond to this challenge from developers. The Region would defend its plan at the

Ontario Municipal Board.

Challenges from the Ontario Municipal Board

While challenges from developers were expected, the challenge from the Ontario

Municipal Board (OMB) was not. The OMB, as a provincial tribunal, adjudicates land use

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[30] It should be noted that the OMB reported that the land budget submitted by the developers finally

proposed an urban boundary expansion of 1053 hectares, not the 1298 listed in the version they submitted to the

Region. While it is not clear why this discrepancy exists, it is possible some additional revisions were made to the

developers' land budget before the hearing proceeded. The 1053 number would be cited throughout the OMB case.

Ontario Municipal Board, "Decision Delivered by Steven Stefanko and Joseph Sniezek and Order of the Board."

[31] Eby, "Revised Regional Land Budget - Regional Official Plan Ontario Municipal Board Hearing (Phase

1)," 2.

[32] Region of Waterloo, "Regional Council Minutes: Wednesday, June 6, 2012," 4.

planning appeals in Ontario. In January of 2013, the OMB released a ruling[33] that was widely seen to undermine the Region's official plan, and to set precedents that would undermine provincial smart growth policies.

It is fair to say that regional staff were shocked by the ruling.[34] A ruling released the previous month on Port Hope's plan had rejected the 1995 Projection Methodology Guideline based on housing-by-type,[35] and found that using "past housing market performance (as influenced by demographics) [as] the gauge for predicting how the Municipality can expect to grow over the next twenty years … is counter to [Growth Plan] directives which require GTA municipalities to adopt new growth patterns and land use efficiencies," and thus "the market demand argument is more appropriately a challenge of the intent and legislative authority of the [Growth Plan]."[36]

Yet in the Region of Waterloo's case, the OMB members ruled that they "preferred" the developers' land budget methodology, along with its market demand argument. The Board reached its decision using its standard "de novo" hearing approach, meaning it considered "the same issue that was before the municipality as though no previous decision had been made."[37]

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[33] Ontario Municipal Board, "Decision Delivered by Steven Stefanko and Joseph Sniezek and Order of the Board."

[34] Kevin Eby, interview by author, Waterloo, ON.

[35] McCrea, "Co-Ordinated Review of Ontario's Land Use Policy Plans," 7.

[36] Ontario Municipal Board, "Decision Delivered My M. A. Sills and Order of the Board," December 14, 2012, http://www.omb.gov.on.ca/e%2Ddecisions/pl070770%2Ddec%2D14%2D2012.pdf.

[37] Ontario Ministry of Municipal Affairs, "OMB Review - Public Consultation Document," October 2016, 19, http://www.mah.gov.on.ca/AssetFactory.aspx?did=15814.

While a 2007 change[38] required the OMB to "'have regard to' the decisions of Council," the

Board stated in its ruling that this only meant that it had to have "minimal deference."[39] As a

broad group of University of Waterloo experts summarized, "In other words, the OMB when

making these kinds of decisions really doesn't have to consider a Council's decision, but only be

aware of it."[40] The OMB was empowered to make what it thought was "'best' decision," rather

than to evaluate "validity of the decision under appeal."[41] The OMB seemed to embrace the idea

that it could simply choose whichever of the two land budgets it preferred.

Thus the OMB sided with the developers on the first three challenges outlined in the

previous section. It embraced the developers' housing-by-type analysis and historically-based

assumptions about seniors' housing choices, and found that the Growth Plan did not require

densities to actually be achieved in the life of the plan. Despite siding with developers on all

other aspects of the land budget, the OMB agreed with the Region's interpretation on the

question of takeouts. Despite this concession to the Region's position, in the first phase of the

OMB appeal of the official plan, the Region had largely lost.

Regional council did not accept the ruling. Within two weeks, council would decide to

fight the decision using all of the legal options open to it: it would ask the OMB to rehear the

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[38] Ibid.

[39] Ontario Municipal Board, "Decision Delivered by Steven Stefanko and Joseph Sniezek and Order of the
Board," 21.

[40] Jeffrey M. Casello et al., "Waterloo OMB Response," February 26, 2013, 2,
http://www.environment.uwaterloo.ca/u/jcasello/OMB/Waterloo_OMB_Response.pdf.

[41] Ontario Ministry of Municipal Affairs, "OMB Review - Public Consultation Document," 19.

case, and it would pursue an appeal in Divisional Court.[42] After the OMB rejected the request for

a rehearing, the Region proceeded to court while simultaneously working to negotiate with the

other parties.[43]

Like the developers' appeal and land budget, the OMB ruling would not produce a

significant dilemma for regional council. Council promptly stuck to its own plan. Deliberations

on legal strategy are usually completed 'in camera,' or out of the public's view.[44] It is therefore

difficult to reconstruct council's debate on the matter. It is safe to say, however, that there was

broad consensus on the decision to appeal the ruling.[45] Rob Horne, the Region's commissioner

of housing, planning, and community services, said at the time, "Basically, regional council

believes there are some fundamental flaws in the board decision."[46]

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[42] Pender, "Region Defends Actions to Curb Sprawl; Council Votes to Appeal Decision Opening More Lands to Development."

[43] Terry Pender, "Planning Battle Heads to Court; Region Is Challenging Municipal Board Ruling That Could Fundamentally Change Development Plans," *Waterloo Region Record*, April 4, 2013, First edition, sec. Local.

[44] Despite open meeting rules, Ontario municipalities are allowed to discuss legal issues in camera, presumably so that the rules do not require municipalities to share all their legal strategy deliberations with their opponents, thus weakening their hand.

[45] While councillors are prohibited from discussing the details of in camera deliberations, I asked each of the 15 councillors I interviewed whether it was their impression there was a broad consensus on the decision to appeal. They overwhelmingly agreed there was broad consensus on the appeal decision.

[46] Pender, "Region Defends Actions to Curb Sprawl; Council Votes to Appeal Decision Opening More Lands to Development."

Five Factors that Diminished the Dilemma

There were five main factors that reinforced council's existing beliefs about smart growth and the importance of defending the Regional Official Plan against the OMB ruling. They were provincial implications, disrespect for council, public opinion, the fundamental flaw, and procedural unfairness.

First, there was widespread agreement that the ruling was a threat to the provincial Growth Plan, and thus a problem for smart growth across the Greater Golden Horseshoe, and not just in Waterloo Region. As planning commissioner Rob Horne told the Record, "We have come to the conclusion at this point, and regional council has as well, the application of the Growth Plan is really our major point of contention."[47] By overruling the Region's land budget in favour of a housing-by-type analysis that the Region did not believe conformed to the Growth Plan, and by ruling that the province had not intended that its density targets actually had to be met, there was widespread concern that the ruling would jeopardize implementation of the provincial Growth Plan. As Kevin Curtis, planner and then interim director of community planning, says, "the politicians…bought into the idea that we were being leaders, and we were respecting the word and intent in the Growth Plan and provincial documents, and we were going to do our bit…to keep a lid on our growth."[48]

Second, the ruling was based on a certain amount of disrespect for the decisions council had made to support smart growth. The ruling disregarded at least a decade of regional planning, done by the Region and adopted by council. To accept the ruling would have been to accept the weakening of the Region's smart growth plans. But it also would have meant that council would

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[47] Ibid.

[48] Kevin Curtis, interview by author, Kitchener, ON.

have to accept the OMB's assertion that its board members were in a better position to decide the land budget issue than council was.[49] Thus regional council's beliefs in favour of smart growth were reinforced by their beliefs about the importance of their own role in local decision-making, particularly on planning.

Third, public opinion was solidly behind the Region's decision to appeal. Unlike on the LRT issue, council did not have to weigh diverse pieces of information about support and opposition from different parts of the public. Those speaking about the ruling, a relatively obscure planning issue, were overwhelmingly in support of the Region's actions and against the OMB ruling, both locally and across the province.

At the local level, there was considerable community anger over the ruling. In the months that followed the ruling, it received considerable attention in the opinion pages of the daily paper. While one columnist[50] and a couple of letter writers[51] opposed to the Region's plan hailed

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[49] As the ruling said, "it is undeniable, in our estimation, that a land budget exercise for purposes of the Growth Plan is an inherently detailed, complex and arduous process. To expect Council members to completely and assiduously appreciate each and every assumption made, statistical projection given and nuance associated with a particular methodology, would be unrealistic in the circumstances. …in light of the fact that we, and not Regional Council, had the benefit of hearing extensive evidence and submissions with respect to each of the methodologies utilized, we do not agree with Regional Council that the Region's methodology should be endorsed." Ontario Municipal Board, "Decision Delivered by Steven Stefanko and Joseph Sniezek and Order of the Board," 21–22.

[50] Peter Shawn Taylor, "Region Shoves Homeowner Concerns to the Back of the Bus," *Waterloo Region Record*, February 7, 2013, First edition, sec. Editorial; Peter Shawn Taylor, "Condos or Cradles: Our Region's Efforts to Kill the Family Dream," *Waterloo Region Record*, February 28, 2013, First edition, sec. Editorial; Peter Shawn Taylor, "Smart Growth: It Ain't Smart and It Ain't Growth," *Waterloo Region Record*, April 18, 2013, First edition, sec. Editorial; Peter Shawn Taylor, "Region Fights Dirty in Losing Battle over Development," *Waterloo Region Record*, August 22, 2013, First edition, sec. Editorial.

the ruling, many writers expressed various levels of outrage over the ruling.[52] More detailed

responses came through other avenues. Local business owners and community groups made

public statements against the ruling.[53] A group of experts from the University of Waterloo

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[51] Steve Bongelli, "A Smooth Ride," *Waterloo Region Record*, February 11, 2013, First edition, sec.

Editorial; Cyril Zister, "Rural Community an Accepting Lot," *Waterloo Region Record*, February 16, 2013, First

edition, sec. Editorial.

[52] Mark L. Dorfman, "Bravely Accepting a New Human Environment," *Waterloo Region Record*, March

14, 2013, First edition, sec. Editorial; Emil Frind, "Region Right to Appeal," *Waterloo Region Record*, February 5,

2013, First edition, sec. Editorial; Kate Daley, "Centrally Located Housing a Boon," *Waterloo Region Record*,

March 2, 2013, First edition, sec. Editorial; David Macklin, "Farmland Is Precious," *Waterloo Region Record*, May

10, 2013, First edition, sec. Editorial; Jason Thistlethwaite, "A Model of Bottom-up Decision-Making," *Waterloo

Region Record*, May 7, 2013, First edition, sec. Editorial; Tony Florio, "Sprawl Isn't a Financially Sustainable

Proposition," *Waterloo Region Record*, May 31, 2013, First edition, sec. Editorial; Emil Frind, "Missed Big

Picture," *Waterloo Region Record*, August 28, 2013, First edition, sec. Editorial; Mike Boos, Kate Daley, and Kevin

Thomason, "Balancing Growing up and Growing out," *Waterloo Region Record*, September 14, 2013, First edition,

sec. EDITORIAL; George Burrett, "Our Sprawling Future," *Waterloo Region Record*, January 29, 2013, First

edition, sec. Editorial; Carrah Johnston, "Municipal Board Decision Undermines Region," *Waterloo Region Record*,

February 7, 2013, First edition, sec. Editorial; Allan Balfour, "A Great Day," *Waterloo Region Record*, February 25,

2013, First edition, sec. Editorial; Manfred Kuxdorf, "It May Be Time to Scrap Municipal Board," *Waterloo Region

Record*, February 28, 2013, First edition, sec. Editorial.

[53] Leena Miller et al., "Local Business Leaders Speak out for Smart Growth," *Kitchener Post*, June 6, 2013,

Internet Archive, https://web.archive.org/web/20130722075705/http://www.kitchenerpost.ca/opinion/local-business-

leaders-speak-out-for-smart-growth; Waterloo Region Food System Roundtable, "Waterloo Food System Round

Table Motion Respecting Waterloo Region Official Plan," March 20, 2013,

http://smartgrowthwaterloo.ca/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2013/04/WaterlooFoodSystemRoundTable.pdf; Mike

Boos, "Choosing a Better Land-Use Future," *TriTAG*, April 8, 2013,

http://www.tritag.ca/blog/2013/04/08/choosing-a-better-land-use-future/; Mike Morrice, "SWR Supports the

published an open letter that took particular issue with the fact that the ruling insisted "that future housing needs… be based primarily upon past trends,"[54] and objected to the legal standard of minimal deference: "a decade-long planning process, founded on public input, and endorsed by councils deserves significantly more attention than 'minimal deference.'"[55] In the weeks that followed, a grassroots website called Smart Growth Waterloo Region was started by community members to oppose the ruling.[56]

Opposition to the ruling emerged in other parts of the province, as well, due largely to the apparent threat to the Growth Plan that the ruling posed. Provincial and national groups like the Ontario Greenbelt Alliance and Environmental Defence expressed concerns about the ruling.[57] In April of that year, the Region was successful in imploring the provincial government to join the court case against its own tribunal's ruling. Local MPP and cabinet minister John Milloy, in

Region's Smart-Growth Planning Policies," *Sustainable Waterloo Region*, April 2, 2013, http://www.sustainablewaterlooregion.ca/our-programs/policy-engagement/regional-smart-growth-plan/; Margaret Santos, "Pedestrian Charter Steering Committee: Open Letter to the Community in Support of the Countryside Line as Proposed in the Region of Waterloo's Official Plan," April 21, 2013, https://www.scribd.com/doc/137985182/Pedestrian-Charter-Steering-Committee-statement-on-the-OMB-appeal-of-the-Countryside-Line; Karen Buschert, "We Must Preserve Our Greenspaces," *Waterloo Region Record*, April 15, 2013, First edition, sec. Editorial.

[54] Casello et al., "Waterloo OMB Response," 1.

[55] Ibid., 2.

[56] Mike Boos, Kate Daley, and Kevin Thomason, "Residents Fighting Dangerous OMB Precedent Launch Website," *Smart Growth Waterloo Region*, April 7, 2013, http://smartgrowthwaterloo.ca/2013/04/06/residents-fighting-dangerous-omb-precedent-launch-website/.

[57] Terry Pender, "Region's Legal Battle over Sprawl Closely Watched," *Waterloo Region Record*, February 2, 2013, First edition, sec. News.

announcing the province's involvement, spoke of the importance of provincial smart growth plans.[58]

Those on the other side of the issue were much quieter. The developers who had won a victory in their fight against smart growth had a particular planner who often gave quotes to the newspaper,[59] but he showed some hesitation to comment too extensively on "pending litigation."[60] He also stressed at times that he felt the right outcome was to reach a negotiated settlement rather than continuing the judicial appeal.[61] These comments did not seem to launch a groundswell of opposition to the Region's actions.

Based on those expressing visible opinions, there was a great deal of support in the community and from other parts of the province for the Region's plan and against the OMB decision, and in support of the Region's quick decision to appeal. No dilemma was initiated by public opinion in the aftermath of the ruling; the interested public was generally on board.

Fourth, there was indeed, as Horne implied, a fundamental flaw in the ruling. The Region had reason to believe that the ruling was actually much worse than the public knew. The OMB's ruling did not simply oppose provincial smart growth plans. It also made a significant mistake.

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[58] Terry Pender, "Ontario Backs Region in Sprawl Battle; Province Wants Say in Court Case," *Waterloo Region Record*, April 13, 2013, First edition, sec. News.

[59] Terry Pender, "Ruling Squashes Cap on Sprawl," *Waterloo Region Record*, January 24, 2013, First edition, sec. News; Pender, "Region Defends Actions to Curb Sprawl; Council Votes to Appeal Decision Opening More Lands to Development."

[60] Pender, "Ontario Backs Region in Sprawl Battle; Province Wants Say in Court Case."

[61] Pender, "Planning Battle Heads to Court; Region Is Challenging Municipal Board Ruling That Could Fundamentally Change Development Plans."

Since the OMB sided with the developers on most aspects of the land budget, it would be simple to look at the resulting ruling as a simple loss: as the OMB stating, in its own words, that "The Landowners Land Budget is preferred to that of the Region's."[62] The part of the ruling in favour of the Region's takeouts did not get much public attention. That part of the ruling seemed, on the surface, like a small win for the Region, and the massive loss over the land budget quickly consumed the attention of those who care about regional planning.

However, the OMB had not simply chosen the developers' land budget over the Region's. It had used all aspects of the developers' land budget except the takeouts. In effect, the OMB had created a third, hybrid methodology. That hybrid would have required much more land than even the developers' land budget asked for.[63]

The reason was the effect of the takeouts. The developers' land budget excluded approximately 600 additional hectares that could not be built on from their density calculation.[64] If only provincially listed takeouts could be used in the developers' land budget, as the OMB ruled, the people and jobs on those unbuildable 600 hectares would have to be accommodated elsewhere to meet the density requirements. At a density of 50 people and jobs per hectare, that amounts to 30,000 additional people and jobs that would have to be accommodated in the areas that would be built on.[65]

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[62] Ontario Municipal Board, "Decision Delivered by Steven Stefanko and Joseph Sniezek and Order of the Board," 22.

[63] Kevin Eby tells me, "I've never explained this to anybody in writing. And in fact the people I've explained it to don't understand it…. And you will be probably the fifth person in the province who understands it." Kevin Eby, interview by author, Waterloo, ON.

[64] Ibid.

[65] Ibid.

But unlike the Region's land budget, the developers' land budget used by the OMB assumed that the land that would be built on had a particular capacity, which would limit how many people the land could accommodate.[66] As a result, those additional people and jobs would have to be accommodated by a further extension of the urban area. But since those new areas would need to meet those density requirements as well, the density from the initial takeouts could only be added in addition to the base density. And new urban areas would also create more takeouts on which building could not occur, creating additional density that would need to be accommodated on even more land. Every additional hectare added would only provide 12 of the 30,000 people and jobs needed.[67] The requirements for density quickly spiral.

While the concept is complex, its effects are both simple and devastating. The combined effect of the developers' land budget and the Region's takeouts would compound. Regional staff calculated that 2100 hectares of additional land would be required to meet the Board's hybrid methodology, which was twice as much additional land as the developers' land budget had proposed.[68]

Shockingly, the Board did not seem to notice. It is clear that the OMB knew it was requiring a hybrid methodology of sorts, as their ruling stated, "it is our intention that the determinations as above described with respect to Take Outs and the preferability of the Landowners' Land Budget shall be fused to arrive at the net developable area for purposes of the

[66] Ibid.

[67] Ibid.

[68] Ibid.

Urban Boundary Expansion."[69] But it seems likely the Board was not aware of the cumulative effects of its ruling.[70]

Regional staff believed that the OMB was aiming for a compromise, and did not understand the effect of their ruling. As Kevin Curtis explains, "We all inferred that what the board members were saying was, well, we'll take yours and we'll take yours and we'll just split the difference. And when you work it through … it actually ends up adding."[71]

Kevin Eby agrees. "I think they thought that they were cutting a deal between us," Eby says. "They said 1,053 [hectares], we said [the takeouts] were about 600 [hectares], therefore, guess what, you get 453 hectares to be added. When we actually did this… their decision would have resulted in twice the land being brought in. And that was the reason we fought it."[72]

The Region did not share these calculations publically, for fear that the Board would learn the effect of its ruling and stick with it anyway.[73] The Region also did not discuss their calculations with the opposing parties in the case, but staff believed that they must also have

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[69] Ontario Municipal Board, "Decision Delivered by Steven Stefanko and Joseph Sniezek and Order of the Board."

[70] It seems that the Board did eventually notice that this fusion had not been forthcoming. In the background section in a ruling on the case the following year, the OMB noted, "That exercise, to our knowledge, has not been done by the parties and, as a result, the Decision remains incomplete in that respect." That seemingly innocuous statement stepped into an enormous but unspoken controversy. Ontario Municipal Board, "Decision Delivered by J. E . Sniezek and S. J. Stefanko and Order of the Board," April 2, 2014, http://www.omb.gov.on.ca/e-decisions/pl110080-Apr-02-2014.pdf.

[71] Kevin Curtis, interview by author, Kitchener, ON.

[72] Kevin Eby, interview by author, Waterloo, ON.

[73] Ibid.

done the calculation as well, and that the unspoken but common recognition of the "absurd" effects of the ruling encouraged both sides to negotiate as the court appeal progressed.[74]

So the public was broadly in support of the Region's appeal, and it turned out that the decision was much worse than it appeared to the public. While we cannot know what was said in camera, it is safe to assume staff advice would have included the assessment that the actual effect of the ruling was to double the urban expansion for which the greenfield developers were asking. Council had good reason to believe that the ruling was much more of a threat to smart growth and the Region's plans than almost anyone else knew. This would have further reinforced council's belief that the ruling could not be allowed to stand.

Fifth, council soon had reason to believe that judicial norms of procedural fairness had not been followed in their case. Months after their initial decision to appeal and as the case continued, the Region would learn that a main witness for one of the developers had provided training about the developers' land budget methodology to the OMB members hearing the case, behind closed doors.[75] As Kevin Eby describes,

> They received training on land budget preparation from the consultant who actually ended up testifying in our hearing from the developers. And it went so far as she, in doing their training, handed out a sample methodology to the Board that was virtually identical – it was identical in numbers, just formatted slightly differently – to what she put in the written sub[mission]. It was absurd.[76]

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[74] Ibid.

[75] Jeff Outhit, "Development Decision Biased: Region; Council Alleges Consultant Testified for Developers, Trained OMB Members," *Waterloo Region Record*, August 14, 2013, First edition, sec. Local.

[76] Kevin Eby, interview by author, Waterloo, ON.

This had occurred in April of 2012, while the OMB was proceeding with the Region's case.[77] The Region was not told that the training had taken place and that the developers' consultant was involved.[78] In short, the Region argued that the consultant for the developers had had an unfair and undisclosed opportunity to persuade tribunal members of the validity of the housing-by-type analysis, which was the central focus on the first phase hearing.

The OMB did not find the Region's complaint persuasive,[79] and the Region pursued a judicial review on the question of whether the training and the lack of disclosure constituted a violation of procedural fairness. The question of the legal errors the Region alleged in their original appeal was put on hold until the procedural fairness question was decided.[80] In the fall of 2014, right before the end of the council term, the same two board members behind the original decision ruled that there was "no reasonable apprehension of bias."[81] Regional council would vote to appeal the OMB's latest ruling on its own bias, in addition to asking the OMB to rescind the decision.[82] Thus the secret training was one more buttress for council's support for its official plan: it could not even trust that basic judicial norms had been followed in arriving at the damaging ruling.

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[77] Jeff Outhit, "Technical Planning Tiff Turns into Major Showdown," *Waterloo Region Record*, August 15, 2013, First edition, sec. News.

[78] Ontario Municipal Board, "Decision Delivered by J. E . Sniezek and S. J. Stefanko and Order of the Board," 4.

[79] Outhit, "Technical Planning Tiff Turns into Major Showdown."

[80] Ontario Municipal Board, "Decision Delivered by Joseph Sniezek and Steven Stefanko and Order of the Board," September 18, 2014, 2, http://www.omb.gov.on.ca/e-decisions/pl110080-Sep-18-2014.pdf.

[81] Ibid., 11.

[82] Region of Waterloo, "Regional Council Minutes: Wednesday, October 8, 2014," October 8, 2014, 5, http://www.regionofwaterloo.ca/en/regionalGovernment/resources/CM2014-1008.pdf.

The Regional Official Plan was still in legal limbo at the end of the council term, but council was continuing to fight for it. In the face of the 2013 OMB ruling, regional council's belief in its official plan was bolstered by the ruling's threat to provincial policies, the disrespect shown by the tribunal to their role representing their community, and public support for the official plan. The even more damaging mistake in the ruling and the alleged procedural fairness violation compounded their reasons to fight the ruling instead of altering their beliefs to adapt to it.

Thus the OMB ruling would not provide more of a challenge to council's beliefs than the developers' appeals had. Neither the entirely expected appeals of the plan, nor the entirely unexpected disaster of a ruling by the OMB, posed significant dilemmas for the 2010 to 2014 regional council. Council stuck with its commitment to smart growth.

Conclusion

The court case continued after the close of the council term, and so did the negotiations with the developers.[83] In May of 2015, they reached a negotiated settlement. While the Region would allow an additional 255 hectares of new urban development, rather than the developers' preferred 1,053,[84] the deal preserved the fundamental policy directions of the ROP, including the Countryside Line, the Protected Countryside, and crucially, the Region's land budget

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[83] Paige Desmond, "Region, Developers Try to Reach Deal on Land Plan," *Waterloo Region Record*, March 3, 2015, sec. News.

[84] The negotiated settlement also allowed for approximately 200 hectares to be added between 2016 and 2019 to accommodate the provincial government's more recent revised forecasts for higher growth. Region of Waterloo, "Region Reaches Settlement on New Regional Official Plan," *Region of Waterloo*, May 26, 2015, http://www.regionofwaterloo.ca/en/newslist/index.aspx?corpId=58cynQlfgqiAYQyTLmpurQeQuAleQuAl&newsId=bau4mb0CY9Zn7ZsdxOkeogeQuAleQuAl.

methodology.[85] Once approved by the OMB, the comprehensive settlement brought the Region's

Official Plan into effect in June of 2015.[86] By the time it was all over, the Region had spent $1.7

million defending its plan at the OMB and in court.[87]
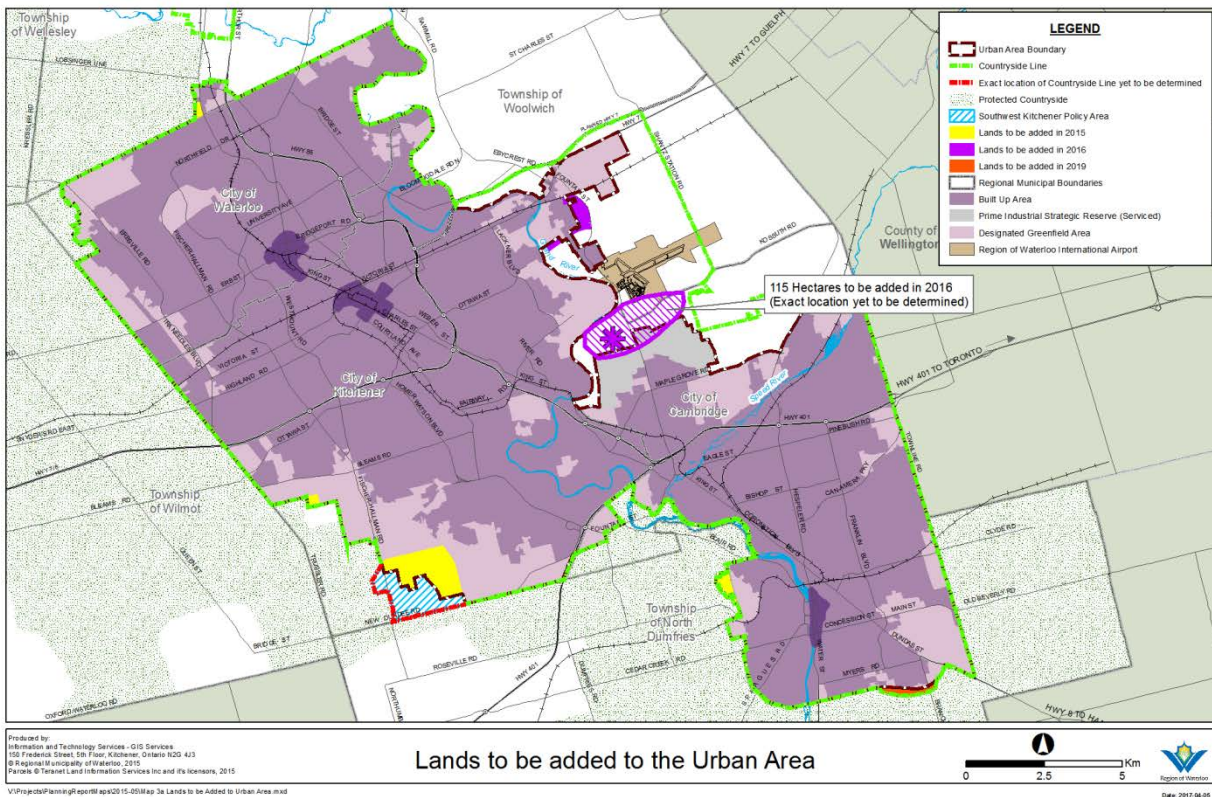
Figure 6: Map showing the settlement reached with the appellants that brought the Regional Official Plan into force in 2015. Source: Corporate Services, Information Technology Services, Region of Waterloo. Copyright: Region of Waterloo. Used with permission.

So in the end, the 2010 to 2014 regional council would persevere in the face of two major

threats to its smart growth plans. It resolved substantive dilemmas over LRT, and did not face

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[85] Ibid.

[86] Ontario Municipal Board, "Memorandum of Oral Decision Delivered by Steven Stefanko and Joseph

Sniezek on June 18, 2015 and Order of the Board," July 14, 2015, http://www.omb.gov.on.ca/e-decisions/pl110080-

Jul-14-2015.pdf.

[87] Paige Desmond, "Region Spent $1.7M Fighting Land Plan Ruling," *Waterloo Region Record*, June 2,

2015, sec. News.

substantive dilemmas over the OMB decision. But the actions that council took to defend the LRT project and the Regional Official Plan secured two central features of the Region's smart growth plans. Ken Seiling had been right. It had been a transformational council, one way or the other.

Learning from Dilemmas

The story of Part II has been the story of a particular council's decisions to defend a long-term growth management strategy. This story serves an important purpose: it uses the concept of dilemma to provide an explanation of the decisions of regional council as a group. This is my first move in individualizing Bevir and Rhodes's concepts: to apply the concepts of beliefs, actions, and dilemmas to a set of specific policy decisions made by a specific group at a specific place and time. This story allows me to discuss the overarching pressures and trends behind the decisions of this council as a whole, and to show why the decisions regional council made to defend LRT and the ROP are not especially surprising, after all, based on this assessment of the dilemmas that council did or did not face.

This story is therefore useful. It illuminates a lot about why council made the decisions it did. However, in choosing to illuminate these features, this story obscures other things. It is too clean. If I take this interpretive methodological approach seriously, I must acknowledge that it is individuals who have agency. Individuals hold webs of beliefs, and modify them in response to dilemmas. In highlighting the beliefs of a group, I have had to obscure the beliefs of the individuals that comprise it, and the decisions that each of them had to make to support smart growth, or not, during this council term.

In Part III, I meet each of the members of this council as individuals, and tell a story about their beliefs and actions. These stories provide a glimpse of the webs of beliefs that each of them hold, along with their consistencies and contradictions.

The analysis that follows both builds on and troubles the story I have told in Part II. Part II shows what looks like a strong consensus around smart growth, LRT, and the Regional Official Plan, based on a viewpoint of council as a body. Part III shows that individual councillors hold diverse beliefs about smart growth, as Bevir and Rhodes would say, for reasons of their own. It also shows that what looks like a stable consensus at regional council is actually a much more contingent overlap in views.

Part III: Webs of Beliefs

Introduction

In the preceding parts, I have told two different kinds of stories. The first was a historical narrative about growth management and regional government in the Waterloo area, which serves to focus on tradition. The second was an analysis of the dilemmas regional council as a whole faced, or did not face, as a result of the two major challenges made to the Region's smart growth plans during the 2010 to 2014 regional council term.

In Part III, I consider the 16 members of that council as individuals, and place the beliefs and actions of these situated agents who interest me in their own contexts. Context, for Bevir and Rhodes, is "the wider web of beliefs the actor reaches against a historical background."[1] In order to take this insight seriously, I have to consider these 16 people as individuals, not simply as examples or illustrations of a broader group, or as a source of data on that group.

As a result, I cannot primarily discuss these 16 people in aggregate or summary. Most approaches to social science research would discuss the results of interviews and document review by describing the trends they observe, and by pulling out illustrations of what the individuals share, or do not share. Some might provide a quantitative description of how many interview subjects referenced which themes in response to certain questions. For example, if my analysis proceeded in this way, it might contain a section that contrasts and compares the

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[1] Bevir and Rhodes, *Routledge Handbook of Interpretive Political Science*, 15.

differences and similarities of reasons each individual gives for supporting LRT, making choices about grouping responses, and perhaps describing those results by counting them.[2]

This more conventional approach to describing research findings, particularly findings from interviews, can certainly be valuable. Generalization in this way can give us better information about the scope and scale of various experiences and viewpoints among particular groups, and can impose a tight and clear order on those results by grouping them into clearly defined categories.

Nevertheless, such an approach does not serve my purposes here. Seen in light of the philosophical underpinnings I outlined in Chapter 2, such a style of reporting research findings is yet another way social scientists have contrived to make results more clear by taking them out of context. "Holism," Bevir and Rhodes argue, "points to the importance of spelling out beliefs by showing how they are linked to one another, not by trying to reduce them to categories such as social class or institutional position. We explain beliefs – and so actions and practices – by unpacking the conceptual connections in a web of beliefs, rather than by treating beliefs as variables."[3]

Once I have decided that I must focus on individuals in the context of their webs of beliefs, the question becomes how to unpack these conceptual connections most effectively for my purposes.

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[2] Of course, social science that performs such analysis is no less of an interpretation than the approach I take in Part III, even in its most quantitative form. As Barbara Czarniawska-Joerges notes, "A 'counted text' is a new text that must be interpreted." Czarniawska-Joerges, *Narratives in Social Science Research*, 135.

[3] Bevir and Rhodes, *The State as Cultural Practice*, 67.

A Narrative Approach: Vignettes Centered on Interviews

In Part III, I show how a narrative approach based on vignettes can be a productive way of unpacking these conceptual connections in the webs of beliefs of different situated agents. In this approach, I do not generalize across these individuals, but rather tell stories about each of them *as* individuals.

"Narratives work," Bevir and Rhodes argue, "by relating actions to the beliefs and desires that produce them and by situating these beliefs and desires in particular historical contexts."[4] All three parts of this work serve this purpose, in their own way. But in Part III, I make a more significant departure from the previous two parts, which are still fairly recognizable as standard argumentative academic writing.

Part III is not written in the form of argumentative chapters. Instead, it is written in the form of a series of vignettes. As Margot Ely and her colleagues explain, "a vignette restructures the complex dimensions of its subject for the purpose of capturing, in a brief portrayal, what has been learned over a period of time."[5]

Ely and her colleagues identify different types of vignettes for illustrative purposes. The style of vignettes I have used in Part III most closely resembles what they term a "*portrait* or *characterization vignette*."[6] Each of these 16 vignettes provides an illustration of a specific situated agent, a regional councillor. Ely and her colleagues note, however, that "the line

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[4] Bevir and Rhodes, *Routledge Handbook of Interpretive Political Science*, 17.

[5] Margot Ely et al., *On Writing Qualitative Research: Living by Words*, Falmer Press Teachers' Library Series (London: Falmer Press, 1997), 70.

[6] Ibid., 76.

between" the different types of vignettes "is often blurry at best," and many vignettes combine elements of the different types they identify.[7]

I have chosen to situate these vignettes in the moment in time when I conducted each interview.[8] While the quotations taken from the interviews are accurate, and fully cited, each vignette is not a condensed version of the interview. The data collected during the interview and during the document analysis, described in Chapter 1, have been integrated to tell a story of each person, told through the lens of our conversation at a particular moment and place in time. As a temporal strategy, I write in the present tense using the moment of the interview as the vignette's perspective, and primarily use a linear form of time.[9][10]

I chose to focus each vignette through the moment of each interview in order to highlight the contingency both of research methods and of the role of the researcher. First, this retelling of the interviews focuses the reader's attention on the temporal and spatial contingency of social science research methods, and particularly of interviews. As Barbara Czarniawska-Joerges explains, "It is important to understand that interviews do not stand for anything else; they represent nothing else but themselves. An interview is an interaction that becomes recorded, or

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[7] Ibid., 77–78.

[8] The only exception to this is the vignette about Claudette Millar, who was not interviewed due to her death.

[9] See William G. Tierney, "Lost in Translation: Time and Voice in Qualitative Research," in *Representation and the Text: Re-Framing the Narrative Voice* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1997), 28–30, https://www.library.yorku.ca/find/Record/1547469.

[10] It should be noted, as well, that the order in which the vignettes are presented is not the order in which the interviews were conducted. I have presented the 16 vignettes in an order that emphasizes certain themes, continuities and contrasts, and have provided descriptive titles to individual or small groups of vignettes.

inscribed, and this is what it stands for."[11] As she continues, "An interview is not a window on social reality but it is a part, a sample of that reality."[12]

Temporally, all social science data are reflective of the particular moment in which they were created. The interviews necessarily reflect only the stories the participants tell at the moment of the interview. The documents, used to design these interviews and to assess and fill out these stories, are also temporally bound. They reflect contingent perspectives of the situated agents who created them in a particular moment in time.

All social science data, then, are temporally situated. The way we reflect time in social science writing is a choice. I choose to tell a story through the moment of the interview to highlight that the webs of beliefs explored in the interviews, in particular, are temporally situated.

Spatially, this choice also allows me to situate the data collection in space. Social scientists often ignore the fact that interviews happen in actual spaces. For these interviews, I met people in places across Waterloo Region. These interviews took place in spaces that have shaped and been shaped by the actions outlined in this study.

In many cases, these interview locations are connected to the stories of these individuals, and their web of beliefs about the topic that interests me. Various offices and coffee shops in different neighbourhoods and districts say something, too, about the lives these people lead and have led. In some cases, participants explicitly referred to the places in which we were meeting as part of how they understand the issues we discussed.

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[11] Czarniawska-Joerges, *Narratives in Social Science Research*, 49.

[12] Ibid., 45.

Thus, just as data collection cannot truly be abstracted from its location in time, it cannot truly be abstracted from its location in space. Focusing these vignettes through the interviews highlights both the temporal and spatial contingency of the data we use as researchers.[13]

Second, focusing these vignettes through the interviews makes the contingency of the researcher visible in the work. As Naeem Inayatullah explains, "Academic writing supposes a precarious fiction. It assumes the simultaneous absence and presence of the writer within the writing. The writer presents herself/himself as absent, as distant, and as indifferent to the writing and ideas…. The author's absence qualifies him or her as 'objective' and 'scientific.'" But, as Inayatullah continues, "The central problem of fictive distancing is that the supposed scientist only pretends to be absent. The personal biases that objectivity was meant to eliminate are merely hidden within and behind the science."[14] Inayatullah notes that these observations have been common in his field of international relations for decades.[15]

If the researcher's particularity is always within and behind the research, this "precarious fiction"[16] can be a problem across social science disciplines and approaches. The interpretive epistemological approach I am using is more explicit about this. It assumes, as Bevir and Rhodes say, an "undifferentiated social context, which researchers slice up to explain whatever set of

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[13] The interview locations were chose based on initial discussions between the researcher and each participant, based on nothing more than convenience of the participant and the hopes that the space chosen would be quiet enough to allow for an audible recording of the conversation. Thus, while the choice of location was not based on the substance of this dissertation, the location still becomes a part of the interaction that is recorded.

[14] Naeem Inayatullah, "Falling and Flying: An Introduction," in *Autobiographical International Relations: I, IR* (Oxon: Routledge, 2011), 5.

[15] Ibid., 6.

[16] Ibid., 5.

beliefs or actions happens to interest them."[17] This should preclude ignoring the person or persons doing the slicing.[18]

"An interpretive approach," Bevir and Rhodes write, "recognises that the human sciences offer interpretations of interpretations."[19] If I accept that social sciences present interpretations of interpretations, then making myself visible as a figure in this research serves to highlight my role as the interpreter. Objectivity cannot be derived from distance from the research; it is much better to highlight the researcher's proximity and constitutive role than to try to hide it.

My choice, then, to centre these narrative vignettes around interviews serves to situate these stories in time and space, and to highlight the pivotal role of the researcher in social science research.

Breaking with Academic Style

Telling stories in the form of vignettes, rather than framing arguments around conventional academic chapters, helps me to achieve four additional goals for this part.

First, as noted above, this narrative approach allows me to take Bevir and Rhodes's invocation of webs of beliefs seriously. If situated agents act based on their beliefs, and those beliefs cannot be abstracted from their own webs of beliefs, we need different strategies for considering beliefs in their context to do this insight justice. If I were to use a more conventional academic style, even while I focused on the webs of beliefs of specific individuals rather than generalizing from them, I could present a list of relevant beliefs for each individual in turn. But

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[17] Bevir and Rhodes, *Governance Stories*, 21.

[18] For more on this question in Bevir and Rhodes's use of ethnography, see Bevir and Rhodes, *The State as Cultural Practice*, 208–9.

[19] Finlayson et al., "The Interpretive Approach in Political Science," 157.

this would, in its own way, be an unhelpful abstraction. We need more than a longer list of

beliefs for context. We need ways to see people *and* their web of beliefs. These vignettes provide

an opportunity to do so.

Second, this narrative approach allows me to use Part III to 'trouble,' as Kevin

Kumashiro would say,[20] the previous two parts. While my use of detailed vignettes takes more

space and time than a more conventional academic summary approach would, it also allows me

to retain some of the mess, contradiction, and surprise that arises from a serious consideration of

people in their particularity. The stories in the previous two sections are orderly and clean. The

particular stories of these individuals, in some cases, serve to challenge, disrupt, or niggle at this

orderly analysis, and can lead us to question what might have appeared in my previous stories to

be settled and clear, showing them in a more complex light. Thus, this narrative style leaves

more opportunities for both dramatic and subtle disruptions of the much more clean and

convenient stories that comprise Parts I and II.

Third, this narrative approach allows me to highlight, as I advocated in Chapter 1, that

politicians are people. This style of writing puts those people at the centre of the story. While

they are often widely reviled,[21] politicians are also among the most crucial figures of

representative democracies. There are times when it is important to step back from how

politicians see the world to critically assess their goals and the effects of their work. But there are

also times when it is important to make politicians' stories and situations intelligible to those

who have elected them. Whether or not they do, or should, agree with the decisions their

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[20] Kevin Kumashiro, *Troubling Education: Queer Activism and Antioppressive Pedagogy* (New York: RoutledgeFalmer, 2002).

[21] See Medvic, *In Defense of Politicians*, chap. 1.

representatives make, it is important for the public to see those decisions as being made by actual

people within the contexts that confront them. For democracy, we need to be able to critique

politicians and their decisions, but we also need to be able to understand them in context. Our

tools as political scientists for doing the former are much more robust than for doing the latter.

This narrative approach is one tool for doing the latter.

Fourth, this approach allows me to relinquish a bit of narrative control. In giving these

vignettes a more fluid structure, I wish to open more room for you, the reader, to take away

different kinds of observations and questions than the ones I might explicitly suggest to you.

Of course, I am still the writer of these vignettes; as noted above, it would hardly be

possible to ignore my status as the researcher while reading a story about a conversation in which

I am a partner. As Ely and her colleagues note, "For all narrative, the subject matter is brought to

the reader through the filter of the narrator's consciousness, reminding us that the only realities

of the moment come to us through the sway of the narrator's creation."[22] I am, of course,

steering these stories through a trajectory of my choosing, focusing on some things and not

others, as all researchers do. Yet there is, here, more opportunity for diverse reflections from

readers: if I am not always explicitly telling you what I want you to take away from each story,

you have more opportunities to make more choices yourself.

The best analogy for what follows, perhaps, is that of a painting. A painting is not some

neutral reflection of the world as it is. A painting is composed by its creator, who draws attention

to some things and not others, and who has her or his own goals, viewpoints, and objectives. Yet

the importance of the painting is not decided solely by its creator. Those who view and engage

with the painting may take different things from it entirely, in a way that cannot be predicted

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[22] Ely et al., *On Writing Qualitative Research*, 78.

solely through reference to the choices of the artist who created it. The form chosen leaves certain kinds of responses open, and the creator of the work cannot foreclose possibilities for how it will be received by those who engage with it. What the artist means to present is the beginning, not the end, of the production of meaning.

In Part III, I tell stories about what I have learned about these individuals and their beliefs and actions on smart growth, while highlighting both their role and my role in the production of this knowledge. At the same time, though, you and I become partners in the production of knew knowledge. As Barbara Czarniawska-Joerges notes, "What is considered a vice in science – openness to competing interpretations – is a virtue in narrative."[23]

What follows, then, requires both more and less from you as a reader. It requires more because you will have to read through the stories I have presented and decide what matters, in the context of what you have read in Parts I and II, and in the context of your own web of beliefs. It requires less of you because I think the reading is, for its more conversational focus on 16 surprisingly interesting individuals, more engaging than a more traditional academic account might be. I thus ask you to both engage critically with what follows, as we do in the academy, and simultaneously step back and follow along, as you might while reading for pleasure.[24]

At the end of Part III, I will share some observations of my own. But first I ask you to see what you see in the 16 stories that follow.

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[23] Czarniawska-Joerges, *Narratives in Social Science Research*, 8.

[24] I owe this insight to Czarniawska-Joerges, who suggests that we should share both a "*fictional contract*" and a "*referential contract*" with the reader, and ask them to "suspend disbelief, as I intend to please you, but also activate disbelief, as I intend to instruct you." Ibid., 9, 136.

The Vignettes

Image 1: Region of Waterloo Council, 2010-2014. Standing, left to right: Les Armstrong, Jim Wideman, Carl Zehr, Geoff Lorentz, Doug Craig, Sean Strickland, Rob Deutschmann, Ross Kelterborn, Tom Galloway. Seated, left to right: Jean Haalboom, Jane Mitchell, Brenda Halloran, Ken Seiling, Jane Brewer, Claudette Millar, Todd Cowan. Source: Regional Councillors' Office, Region of Waterloo. Copyright: Region of Waterloo. Used with permission.

The Historian

Ken Seiling

On a cold January day, I head to Kitchener's Civic District. Decades ago, before regional government and before the decline of the rational comprehensive approach to planning, this neighbourhood was razed under a grand plan spearheaded by Kitchener Planning Commissioner Bill Thomson. He envisioned a Civic Centre that would house a "courthouse, police station, public library, and an auditorium."[25] The grand plan was eventually realized: amid those four buildings sits the Regional Administrative Headquarters.

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[25] Gerecke, "Waterloo's Bill Thomson: Planning for Power," 68–69.

I meet Ken Seiling in his corner office on the ground floor, which looks out toward the Civic District Park and the Centre in the Square theatre. What strikes me about Seiling's office is its historical touches. The walls feature framed editorial cartoons depicting past controversies. On a shelf, a yellowed photo of an esteemed gentleman peers over us as we meet.

The man in the photo is Albert Seiling, a former councillor, mayor, and reeve on Elmira's council in the 1930s, 40s, 50s, and 60s.[26] He was Ken Seiling's grandfather.[27] "The funny thing is that … when I was old enough to know anything about politics, my grandfather was long out of it. So I never knew him as a politician," Seiling tells me.[28]

The tenor of the office is the right match for Seiling himself. Before he was a politician, Seiling was a history teacher. When he was elected to Woolwich Council in 1976,[29] he was working as a museum director.[30] He became Woolwich mayor in 1978.[31] "After two years of council," he explains, "the mayor of the day wasn't particularly effective, and so I decided either I'd run for mayor or quit."[32] He served as mayor of the township until he was appointed as the regional chair in 1985.[33] He would be the Region's third.[34]

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[26] Bloomfield, Elizabeth and Linda Foster, *Waterloo County Councillors: A Collective Biography* (Guelph, Ont.: Caribou Imprints, 1995), 184.

[27] Ken Seiling, interview by author, Kitchener, ON.

[28] Ibid.

[29] Burtt, "Race for Regional Chair Is Quietest of Campaign; Seiling's Only Rival Opposes Smoking Bylaw."

[30] Jeff Outhit, "Waterloo Region Chair Candidates; Measured Growth and Measured Words Are Hallmarks of Veteran Politician's Style," *Kitchener-Waterloo Record*, November 1, 2003, Final edition, sec. Local.

[31] Lianne Elliott, "Chair's Job Is a Busy One, Seiling Says; Three Candidates for Regional Chair," *Kitchener-Waterloo Record*, November 11, 2006, sec. Local.

[32] Ken Seiling, interview by author, Kitchener, ON.

Despite his years away from the business, Seiling is still, at heart, a historian. He consistently articulates a single story that connects changing provincial approaches to planning with the implementation of smart growth in Waterloo Region. I am speaking with a man who constantly looks both 40 years back and 40 years ahead.

To start, I ask Seiling about his views on growth management. He launches into a story that goes back to the 1960s area planning boards, the expansion pressure on the former Waterloo Township, and the creation of the first Regional Official Policies Plan.[35] For him, these events are on a trajectory that has taken us to the smart growth planning in the Region today. "It's sort of a continual history, when you take a look at it," he explains, "of land stewardship, wanting to do better planning by the 1960s, regional government coming along, creating a regional plan which reflected better growth management and better planning, to the growth management strategy, to the new official plan that we have now."[36]

This remarkable coherence doesn't surprise me. Seiling's approach has been visible in his remarks for decades. In 2002, while gathering support for the Regional Growth Management Strategy, he told the local Rotary Club about the 1960s Fyfe Report.[37] In 2014, speaking at the ground-breaking for the light rail transit project, he talked about the province's decision to create regional governments for planning purposes, about the central transit corridor in the 1976

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[33] Crone, "Law Lets Voters Pick Regional Chairman."

[34] Philip Jalsevac, "Waterloo Region Started Amid "organized Chaos'," *Kitchener-Waterloo Record*, January 2, 1993, Final edition, sec. Front.

[35] Ken Seiling, interview by author, Kitchener, ON.

[36] Ibid.

[37] Seiling, "Does Waterloo Region Have the Will to Face the Challenges of Its Success?"

Official Plan, and about the Region's contribution to Places to Grow.[38] In his public storytelling

and in the stories he tells me today, Seiling effortlessly draws a line between all of these events.

That same coherence is visible in his 2001 report that launched the Region's formal

efforts toward smart growth.[39] It ties the challenges of continued growth in the new century to

1960s development speculation and the creation of the Region.

For our meeting, Seiling has made a copy of that 15-year-old report, and hands it to me.

He is quick to tell me about the leadership shown by staff,[40] with whom he has a reputation for

aligning himself,[41] in developing everything from the first Regional Official Policies Plan to

LRT.[42] Yet as the report he has given me suggests, many of his colleagues have told me that his

leadership has been key in Waterloo Region's embrace of smart growth.

At least some of this is due to his reputation for being a "passive persuader," as his

former council colleague Jim Ziegler once put it,[43] focused on building consensus. "My sense is

that this community is not one that relishes conflict, by and large. They look for solutions,"

Seiling once told The Record.[44] Combined with a reputation for being a deliberate politician,[45]

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[38] Region of Waterloo, *ION Groundbreaking*.

[39] Seiling, "Smart Growth and the Region of Waterloo: Planning for Our Future."

[40] Ken Seiling, interview by author, Kitchener, ON.

[41] Aagaard, "Three Candidates Want to Make Regional History"; Aagaard, "Chairman Ken Seiling."

[42] Ken Seiling, interview by author, Kitchener, ON.

[43] Aagaard, "Chairman Ken Seiling."

[44] Outhit, "Waterloo Region Chair Candidates; Measured Growth and Measured Words Are Hallmarks of Veteran Politician's Style."

[45] Ibid.

for being a strong advocate for the Region at Queen's Park,[46] and for maintaining an ambitious community event schedule,[47] Seiling is undeniably a heavyweight in regional politics. And he has often used his political capital to advance growth management priorities.

Now in his late 60s,[48] Seiling has lived in Elmira, the largest settlement in the townships, his entire life.[49] His family was involved in farming. "We lived in town but we had the large farming operation. So there was an appreciation of agriculture, an appreciation of the rural nature," he says. "So I had a sort of a mixed urban rural background."[50]

But it wasn't urban rural relations that brought Seiling to politics. He had been serving as a community member on Woolwich Township's recreation committee. "It became fairly obvious that the only time you had any sway was if you were an elected person on that committee," he tells me. So he decided to run. "I very quickly learned that the bulk of the issues that we faced were planning issues."[51]

Seiling became mayor, and joined regional council, just two years after the adoption of the first Regional Official Policies Plan, and was there while issues like retirement severances were sorted out. "When I became mayor of Woolwich … my thrust was to try and reinforce this

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[46] Geoff Lorentz, interview by author, Kitchener, ON, November 23, 2015; Doug Craig, interview by author, Cambridge, ON, March 18, 2016.

[47] "I do 250 events [a year]. He does 500," Cambridge Mayor Doug Craig told me of Seiling. "He's throughout the region. He's been down here numerous times. You never, ever, ever see other regional councillors down here [in Cambridge]." Doug Craig, interview by author, Cambridge, ON.

[48] Aagaard, "Three Candidates Want to Make Regional History."

[49] Elliott, "Chair's Job Is a Busy One, Seiling Says; Three Candidates for Regional Chair"; Ken Seiling, interview by author, Kitchener, ON.

[50] Ken Seiling, interview by author, Kitchener, ON.

[51] Ibid.

preservation of rural lands, and forcing growth into in the urban areas," he tells me. "It was not popular in some quarters, because there were people who thought I was anti-development because I wanted to preserve land."[52]

He stuck with his goal when he proposed the Regional Growth Management Strategy in 2001. When it comes to the RGMS, Seiling says it to me like he said it to the public in 2002: while there's typically been urban growth allocated for each of the area municipalities, this couldn't continue.[53] "The city of Waterloo was hitting its boundaries, and there were lots of questions," he tells me. "Were we going to continue to let the cities sprawl out? Which would be the traditional pattern of saying, okay, you've met your boundaries that were set out in 1976, now you can continue to flop out and move out? Or are we going to manage the growth in a constructive sort of way?"[54]

Despite the establishment of such a plan, I wonder if pressure for urban expansion might continue to build as the cities reach their borders. "There is no such thing as an annexation in the regional framework," he tells me. "The only way you can change a boundary in the regional system is for regional council and the municipalities to agree to it. So I don't see that happening."[55]

Despite the protections of the regional system, Seiling sees the need to keep developers in check. In the last decade, he's warned the industry against greenfield speculation,[56] and noted

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[52] Ibid.

[53] Seiling, "Does Waterloo Region Have the Will to Face the Challenges of Its Success?"

[54] Ken Seiling, interview by author, Kitchener, ON.

[55] Ibid.

[56] Jeff Outhit, "Region's Growth Fast-Tracked; Population to Hit 729,000 by 2031 -- 10 Years Earlier than Expected," *Kitchener-Waterloo Record*, January 19, 2006, Final edition, sec. Local.

that provincial growth requirements will be a barrier to developer expansion requests.[57] Seiling

tells me he intentionally keeps his distance from developers. "Everybody knows everybody in

town," he explains. "I don't do lunches, I don't do golf. I'm not entertained by developers. I

draw the line," he says. "With me, developers have no greater access than any other person." The

official plan appeal wasn't settled in time for the 2014 election, and Seiling tells me he refused to

accept donations from the developers involved in the appeal,[58] or to meet with them in a

professional capacity before the appeal was settled.[59]

When it came to the Regional Official Plan, taking on developers eventually meant taking

on the OMB itself. Seiling attributes his support for appealing the OMB ruling to two factors.

"The board made errors," he tells me. "If they had knocked the cornerstone out of the plan, we

would be in trouble." But the second factor was the province's general absence until after the

brutal decision was made. "I think we felt pretty aggrieved the province abdicated its role," he

explains. "Whether it was by accident or by design, I don't know. But they acknowledged their

mistake after the fact, when it was too late."[60]

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[57] Jeff Outhit, "Growth Strategy Calls for Fewer Detached Homes," *Waterloo Region Record*, October 1, 2008, Final edition, sec. Local.

[58] One company that made a donation to Seiling's 2014 campaign, The INCC Corp, had filed an appeal to the Regional Official Plan by the original January 2011 deadline. This may have been a placeholder to preserve their initial options; the company is not listed as a party or participant by the OMB. Region of Waterloo, "Regional Official Plan," December 22, 2010, ii–v; Ontario Municipal Board, "Memorandum of Oral Decision Delivered by Steven Stefanko on September 9, 2011 and Order of the Board," September 21, 2011, http://www.omb.gov.on.ca/e-decisions/pl110080-Sep-21-2011.pdf; Ken Seiling, "Financial Statement - Auditor's Report Form 4," March 27, 2015, http://www.regionofwaterloo.ca/en/regionalGovernment/resources/2014_Election/Ken_Seiling.pdf.

[59] Ken Seiling, interview by author, Kitchener, ON.

[60] Ibid.

Seiling has long said that there was huge public support for the Region's decision to appeal. "The massive support for regional council opposing the OMB decision ... speaks volumes for the desire of people here not to be paving over farmland and preserving our rural lands," he stated in 2014, as the case dragged on.[61] He tells me there was local pressure on the province after the ruling. "There was a lot of public comment. I think the ministry hadn't heard that much for a while."[62]

Seiling had said at the time that he hoped a settlement would be reached.[63] When it was, he spoke in favour of the agreement.[64] "I think we got most of what we wanted," he tells me. "They got a larger allocation of land, but we got all the essentials that were critical to … the plan."[65]

His appreciation for the settlement shows his sense of the long view. It's the same near-term flexibility that accommodates changes in his positions on how best to accomplish growth management goals over time. The infrastructure servicing required for the East Side Lands, a crucial component of his 2001 smart growth proposal that became the RGMS, was something he opposed back in the 70s, when he was Woolwich mayor.[66] "In my early days … I didn't support

[61] Paige Desmond, "Region Seeks Judicial Review on OMB Decision," *Waterloo Region Record*, October 13, 2014, sec. News.

[62] Ken Seiling, interview by author, Kitchener, ON.

[63] Paige Desmond, "Waterloo Land Dispute Becalmed; There Has Been No Movement on Region's Request for Review of OMB Decision," *Waterloo Region Record*, August 26, 2014, First edition, sec. Local; Desmond, "Region, Developers Try to Reach Deal on Land Plan."

[64] Paige Desmond, "Region Settles Huge Land Dispute with Developers," *Waterloo Region Record*, May 27, 2015, First edition, sec. News; Desmond, "OMB Accepts Settlement of Regional Land Dispute."

[65] Ken Seiling, interview by author, Kitchener, ON.

[66] Burtt, "North Cambridge, Breslau Targeted for Development; Plan Aims to Reduce Sprawl Elsewhere."

the development of those lands. And the philosophy at that time was, let's not push more urban development into the rural township at that point in time." It would have been easier to get it done then than it is now, he tells me. "At that time, it was premature."[67] A similar shift is visible in his position on GO trains to Toronto. He spent a decade opposing them, concerned that they would help to turn Waterloo Region into yet another bedroom community of Toronto.[68] But his opposition changed to support.[69] "I didn't think we were a strong enough community, economically at that time, to be able to resist that," he explains. But things have changed, with much more commuting coming into the region from Toronto, as well, particularly from the tech industry. "I think we are strong enough now. And really, to build the economy we need to strengthen the whole line," he says.[70]

But while Seiling is able to change course in response to changing circumstances, his broader vision of growth management holds surprisingly strong, and is consistently articulated. It is this clarity of vision that explains his commitment to LRT. It was around the same time as the RGMS that the Region's chief administrative officer, Gerry Thompson, met with Seiling to talk about LRT. "After we did the growth management strategy, Gerry Thompson called me down to his board room one day," Seiling tells me. The table was covered with maps. "He had a proposal

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[67] Ken Seiling, interview by author, Kitchener, ON.

[68] Catherine Thompson and Kathleen Byrne, "No GO for Now, K-W Told," *Kitchener-Waterloo Record*, November 27, 1990, City edition, sec. Front; Catherine Thompson, "Region Plans to Protect Future Transit Corridor," *Kitchener-Waterloo Record*, April 7, 1999, Final edition, sec. Local.

[69] Lianne Elliott, "Regional Chair Candidates Grilled on Environment; Hidden Valley Road Controversy Spurs Debate as Local Activists Hammer Away," *Kitchener-Waterloo Record*, November 10, 2006, sec. Front.

[70] Ken Seiling, interview by author, Kitchener, ON.

for LRT on the table. And so my reaction at the time was, you mean you really think I can sell this?"[71]

But Seiling came to believe in LRT based on his commitment to smart growth. "I think I was convinced quite early on that, if you wanted to have the intensification, we needed the … rapid transit component."[72] Seiling was lobbying the provincial government for LRT funding as early as 2003.[73] He stuck with the project through the ups and downs of funding announcements,[74] finally defending the project against claims in 2010 that it should be cancelled because provincial and federal funding wouldn't cover the entire capital cost. The Region of Waterloo "never expected 100 per cent to be paid by somebody else," he explained.[75]

He did, however, support revisiting the 2009 approval after the 2010 election.[76] "I want to bring people along," he said then,[77] after his third successful election running on his support for LRT.[78]

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[71] Ibid.

[72] Ibid.

[73] Nicole MacIntyre, "Eves in Town to Promote Bond; Zehr, Seiling Say There's Too Little Time to Take Advantage of Funding," *Kitchener-Waterloo Record*, April 23, 2003, Final edition, sec. Local.

[74] Christian Aagaard, "Governments 'Loose Change' Won't Help Train Proposal," *Kitchener-Waterloo Record*, May 20, 2004, Final edition, sec. Local.

[75] Caldwell, "Rapid Transit Cash Falls Short $300M Commitment Far Less than Ontario Pledged in 2007."

[76] Outhit, "Fast Buses Back in the Mix; Rapid Transit Option Back on Table in about-Face by Regional Council."

[77] Jeff Outhit and Terry Pender, "Seiling Overpowers Challenger for Second Term," *Waterloo Region Record*, October 26, 2010, Final edition, sec. Local.

[78] Jeff Outhit, "Another Stunning Win for Seiling," *Kitchener-Waterloo Record*, November 11, 2003, Final edition, sec. Local; Lianne Elliott, "Public Transit Choices Divide Seiling, Verdun," *Kitchener-Waterloo Record*,

In reflecting on public reaction to the LRT, Seiling brings a perspective that spans decades. He tells me he was saddened that so much of the opposition was coming from retired people in prosperous neighbourhoods. These were "people who had had great benefits of all the spending that had gone on in the seventies, eighties, and nineties. And now suddenly [they] want to turn the tap off for young people coming along after them," he says. "That really was bothersome to me."[79]

But for all his support, Seiling would be forced to sit out on the 2011 vote. With a number of other councillors, he declared a pecuniary interest under the Municipal Conflict of Interest Act because two of his children owned homes along the corridor.[80] He wouldn't return to decisions on LRT until January of 2014, citing recent court rulings that clarified the law.[81] For nearly three years, others would have to carry the weight of defending the project, after the project lost what the Record called its "biggest champion."[82]

But the end of his forced silence started his forced defence. The 2014 election began the same month Seiling returned to the discussion. He would run again,[83] declaring early. And he would face his most aggressive opponent to date.

November 8, 2006, sec. Local; Jeff Outhit, "Veteran Regional Chair Wants Four More Years," *Waterloo Region Record*, October 22, 2010, Final edition, sec. NEWS.

[79] Ken Seiling, interview by author, Kitchener, ON.

[80] Barrick, "Region Chair, Cambridge Mayor Bow out of Transit Votes."

[81] Davis, "Seiling Will No Longer Declare Conflict on LRT."

[82] Barrick, "Region Chair, Cambridge Mayor Bow out of Transit Votes."

[83] Paige Desmond, "Strickland Won't Challenge Seiling for Top Job," *Waterloo Region Record*, January 5, 2014, sec. News.

In the five elections he had previously faced as chair, no one had ever come close to

Seiling.[84] But the 2014 campaign was different. Seiling was challenged by local businessman Jay

Aissa, who was having some of his business's property expropriated for the LRT,[85] and who had

led the most recent charge against the project,[86] including an unsuccessful court challenge.[87]

Aissa ran an anti-establishment campaign that focused on his outsider status and experience as a

business owner.[88]

Aissa's campaign was much more heavily funded, and much more negative, than has

been typical in Waterloo Region. Aissa spent about $248,000, mostly reported as his own

money, to Seiling's $60,000.[89] The Record reported that "Seiling is running a typical campaign

with lawn signs and public appearances, while Aissa is taking an aggressive approach more akin

to provincial or federal politics."[90] Aissa also teamed up in some of his advertisements with other

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[84] Aagaard, "Seiling Steam-Rolls to Win as Regional Chairman"; Burtt, "Seiling Sails to Sixth Term";
Outhit, "Another Stunning Win for Seiling"; Lianne Elliott, "Re-Election Is Smooth Sailing for Seiling; Longtime
Regional Chair Pleased with 'Endorsement' from Voters," *Kitchener-Waterloo Record*, November 14, 2006, sec.
Local; Outhit and Pender, "Seiling Overpowers Challenger for Second Term."

[85] Desmond, "Judge Dismisses Bid to Stop Waterloo Region LRT Project."

[86] Davis, "Aissa Planning Run for Regional Chair after Oberholtzer Withdraws from Race"; "Jay Aissa
Running for Regional Chair."

[87] Desmond, "Judge Dismisses Bid to Stop Waterloo Region LRT Project."

[88] Paige Desmond, "Contest for Regional Chair Aggressive and Escalating," *Waterloo Region Record*,
October 1, 2014, First edition, sec. News.

[89] Aissa, Jay, "Financial Statement - Auditor's Report Form 4," March 26, 2015,
http://www.regionofwaterloo.ca/en/regionalGovernment/resources/2014_Election/Jay_Aissa.pdf; Seiling, "Financial
Statement - Auditor's Report Form 4."

[90] Desmond, "Contest for Regional Chair Aggressive and Escalating."

anti-LRT candidates, emphasizing Seiling's failures,[91] and ran a radio ad with a howling sound, describing Seiling as "a wolf at our doors."[92] Seiling responded to the challenge by spending three times what he had in the previous election,[93] though it was still only a quarter of what his opponent spent. Volunteers rallied to his defence in the final weeks of the campaign. "I was sort of blown away by the kind of support that came out of the woodwork," he says.[94]

In the end, most voters weren't buying what Aissa was selling.[95] Seiling secured 59% of the vote to Aissa's 24%.[96] But it's clear the race left a lasting impression on Seiling. Today, he tells me he's concerned about "what people with unlimited money can do in a democracy." He worries about the potential for abuse in such a large race with existing campaign finance rules that cover municipal elections in Ontario.[97]

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[91] Jay Aissa campaign, "Tired of Being Kept in the Dark?," *Waterloo Chronicle*, October 22, 2014.

[92] Mike McCulloch, "'A Wolf Is at Our Doors,' Analyzing Jay Aissa's Apparent Attack Ad," October 24, 2014, http://mikemcculloch.ca/?p=173.

[93] Region of Waterloo, "2010 Candidate Listing," Internet Archive, accessed August 20, 2015, https://web.archive.org/web/20110930154334/http://www.regionofwaterloo.ca/en/regionalGovernment/resources/candidates.pdf; Seiling, "Financial Statement - Auditor's Report Form 4."

[94] Ken Seiling, interview by author, Kitchener, ON.

[95] As Councillor Galloway told me, "This guy was spending megabucks on nasty, nasty stuff. And it was really refreshing to see that that didn't work. A lot of money flushed down the toilet." Tom Galloway, interview by author, Waterloo, ON, November 23, 2015.

[96] Region of Waterloo, "Current Results," October 29, 2014, http://www.regionofwaterloo.ca/en/regionalGovernment/currentresults.asp.

[97] Ken Seiling, interview by author, Kitchener, ON.

But he still supports direct election for the chair position, as he did in 1997 when it began.[98] "I supported moving to the direct election," Seiling tells me. "It gives the chair independence." [99] He thinks the old system, being chosen by council, was harder than asking the public for their votes. "I used to say the hardest election was the indirect election. Because you're dealing with friends," he explains. "And having to phone them up and say, will you support me? I always found that really tough."[100]

The 1990s reform debates, which he described at the time as "debilitating,"[101] brought changes like direct election of the chair that Seiling supported. But they didn't go far enough. Seiling tells me, as he said then,[102] that he wanted either a single-tier system or a significantly rationalized two-tier system. But after the second phase of the two-tier reform proposal failed at Regional council 11 votes to 10, following years of work,[103] things went quiet.

Yet, on regional reform, too, Seiling takes the long view. He tells me the last wave of local reform efforts ended with the election of Ernie Eves. At the provincial level, "that sort of thing goes in cycles of 20, 25 years," he explains. But on this, too, Waterloo Region was ahead of the curve. "I actually started the regional reform piece before the province did," he tells me, of

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[98] Crone, "Law Lets Voters Pick Regional Chairman."

[99] Ken Seiling, interview by author, Kitchener, ON.

[100] Ibid.

[101] Ken Seiling, "Dear Premier Harris and Minister Clement . . .," *Kitchener-Waterloo Record*, December 4, 1999, Final edition, sec. Front.

[102] Philip Jalsevac, "Politicians Told: 'Put up or Shut up!'; 'Dysfunctional Family' Can't Get Reform Accomplished, Chamber Charges," *Kitchener-Waterloo Record*, February 2, 2000, Cambridge edition, sec. Local.

[103] Rubinoff, "Region Reform Falls Apart; Councillors Agree to Defer All Talks until after November Elections."

the process led by John Sweeney that began years before Mike Harris became premier.[104] "We were actually at the top of the provincial list" for amalgamation, he says, but "we were taken off the list, for political reasons," he confides with his usual mix of candor and discretion. "Even though we were probably, of all the regions in Ontario … one of the best situated."[105]

 While Seiling still thinks some changes are needed, he doesn't see them happening any time soon. "You have to have a government in the province [that] is interested," he tells me. He thinks water and sewer servicing, and fire service, should be handled by the Region, as the second phase of failed local reforms would have done. "There are some things here that should be done," he says. "But until the province is there, I'm not going to have my knees cut out from under me again."[106]

Perhaps Seiling's sense of history gives him a sense of patience. As he said in 1999, at the height of the reform frenzy, "Municipal government in Ontario has always been evolving. … I wouldn't look at anything we create as permanent."[107]

For now, things work pretty well, especially compared to other regional governments in Ontario. "I see more common purpose here. I see less parochialism," he tells me. He attributes that, in part, to "a tone and expectation." That expectation is maintained by the rest of council. "People who have tried to move away from that model, in a quiet sort of way, are almost disciplined, for lack of a better word, by the rest of council, for getting too far out." Council still has productive debate, he emphasizes. "But when people get really, way far out of line, or are

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[104] Ken Seiling, interview by author, Kitchener, ON.

[105] Ibid.

[106] Ibid.

[107] Brian Caldwell, "The Millennium Municipality," *Kitchener-Waterloo Record*, March 20, 1999, Final edition, sec. Perspectives.

seen to be outside the bounds of where the rest of council thinks the community is, … they let people have their say, but life moves on. And so I don't think there's a lot of traction for that sort of thing."[108]

This sense of common purpose has bridged the urban and rural interests on regional council. Seiling tells me the urban councillors here accept that urban ratepayers disproportionately fund rural services. "Nobody ever complains about that," he says. "They accept that that's the role, and that's the way things work." I ask him why. "I think we've just been lucky that it hasn't happened, and I think that everybody has seen that our interests are intertwined."[109]

But things haven't always been smooth. Most obvious, perhaps, is still recent conflicts with representatives from Cambridge over LRT, and more broadly over Cambridge's treatment in the Region. "The amalgamation of three communities into Cambridge was problematic," Seiling tells me, looking back again to 1973. "Quite often, if you need to pull your team together, you need to find something … outside. So I think the Region became sort of the whipping boy for some people down there …. It was their way of dealing with the amalgamation issues internally."[110]

Given Seiling's preference for consensus-building, I wonder what such tensions on an otherwise fairly functional regional council mean for how people work together over time. I ask him about the long-term relationships between councillors, including through some difficult periods. He focuses on the positive, and on what they've accomplished together. "The region

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[108] Ken Seiling, interview by author, Kitchener, ON.

[109] Ibid.

[110] Ibid.

continues to do good things and is able to do good things," he says, keeping his eye on the long view. "And we have these points here and there that on the surface look like they're conflicts, but in reality haven't got in the way of doing business."[111]

Three Mayors of Cambridge

Doug Craig

I meet Mayor Doug Craig at his office at Cambridge City Hall. This new building opened in 2008, on the same site as the 1858 Galt Town Hall building that Cambridge still council uses as its chamber.[112] "This city hall is the first Gold LEED in Canada," Craig tells me proudly.[113]

Craig's experiences getting the new city hall built are an effective illustration of Cambridge politics. "This was the worst experience politically I ever went through," he says. "People were mad. People in Preston would say, well if we can't have it in Preston, I don't want it in Galt ….I got beat up every day for a year and a half on this building before it got built," he recalls. "It's a very difficult city to govern," he explains, "because of the angst about amalgamation."[114]

That 1973 amalgamation left lasting scars on the city. And more recent skirmishes over its lasting effects, and over the spectre of further amalgamations, have left lasting scars on Doug Craig. Craig has been angry about regional government for a long time. "The Region of Waterloo is really not a Region of Waterloo," he explains. "It's a K-W region. It's looked upon

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[111] Ibid.

[112] City of Cambridge, "City Hall and Insignia," accessed November 12, 2016, http://www.cambridge.ca/mayor_city_council/city_hall_and_insignia.

[113] Doug Craig, interview by author, Cambridge, ON.

[114] Ibid.

at Queen's Park that way. In the news media it's looked upon that way. And we're lost. Cambridge is the second largest city. But no one would ever know that."[115]

Craig sees a long-term sense of disrespect for Cambridge in the area. "You know, there's been an attitude, even in the school board, that if you were sent to Cambridge to be a principal, you were downgraded," he tells me. "We're kind of the blue collar – the poor cousin south of the 401."[116]

Craig grew up in Toronto, and came to Cambridge in 1974, in the early days of the City of Cambridge, to accept his first job offer as a teacher with the school board. He had been interested in politics in Toronto from an early age. "I was eight years old and reading the editorial pages," he says. But it was when he moved to Hespeler that he got involved in local politics here. And it was a land use planning issue that brought him into it. "We bought an old farm house up in Hespeler, on Guelph Avenue, which had no houses around it anywhere," he recalls. "They wanted to put in a subdivision around me. That's how I got interested. And I came to City Council and I thought, jeez, anybody could sit up there." He worked with other community members who agreed the subdivision plan was poor, and they managed to get it changed. And then he ran.[117]

Craig was first elected to Cambridge council in 1976,[118] representing Hespeler,[119] on the same night Rene Levesque became premier. "I was pushed off the front headlines for Quebec," he jokes.[120]

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[115] Ibid.

[116] Ibid.

[117] Ibid.

[118] Paige Desmond, "Mayor Doug Craig Seeking Fifth Term," *Waterloo Region Record*, March 25, 2014, sec. News.

After taking a break for the 1980s, he returned to Cambridge council as one of its regional councillors under the double-direct system in 1991.[121] It was from that position that Craig would take centre stage during the Mike Harris years. "They were not good years," he says.[122] While he was strongly opposed to the creation of a single-tier megacity, and what he then called the "the destruction of small-town Ontario" resulting from the province's merger spree,[123] he would become just as incensed that those who wanted bigger government would use the Harris threat to try to strip cities of their areas of jurisdiction.[124]

It was really during the 1990s that Craig's displeasure with regional government would become most visible. But his understanding of the conflict goes back to the 1960s, before he came to the area. As we talk, he mentions the first big wave of provincial municipal reforms: he talks to me about the Fyfe report.[125] "The very earliest model … was that K-W would merge, and Cambridge would be its own city," he tells me. "And Waterloo kicked up a storm. And we ended up with this stuff."[126]

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[119] Doug Craig, interview by author, Cambridge, ON.

[120] Ibid.

[121] Desmond, "Mayor Doug Craig Seeking Fifth Term"; Doug Craig, interview by author, Cambridge, ON.

[122] Doug Craig, interview by author, Cambridge, ON.

[123] Burtt and Thompson, "Sweeney Quits Review of Region."

[124] Doug Craig, "Regional Rumble - Some Municipal Leaders Think Merging Services Will Save Taxpayers Money. Others Feel It Won't and That Communities Will Be Weakened. Communities Can Do a Better Job of Saving Taxpayers Money," *Kitchener-Waterloo Record*, May 7, 1998, Final edition, sec. Insight; Doug Craig, "Quiet the Drum of Regional Reform; We've Hashed and Rehashed This Subject and We Know It's Divisive and Ineffective," *Kitchener-Waterloo Record*, October 11, 2005, Final edition, sec. Insight.

[125] Fyfe and Farrow, "Report of Findings and Recommendations."

[126] Doug Craig, interview by author, Cambridge, ON.

In the second wave of amalgamations in the 1990s, Craig was not alone in pushing against the megacity, but he would also oppose the regionalization of services. He wrote vocal op-eds in the Record.[127] He would even write his own proposal for reform that involved eliminating the Region, inviting the townships to amalgamate with the three respective cities, and having those cities provide services through a region-wide "area Services Board" without taxes or an elected body.[128]

When the councils were separated in 2000 over his persistent objections,[129] Craig ran for the open mayor's seat, on a platform that included having Cambridge separate from the Region. He won.[130] As mayor, he would oppose subsequent efforts from outside of council to push for amalgamation,[131] and advocate to reverse the move to separated councils.[132] He would oppose

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[127] Doug Craig, "Kitchener Would Pay Freight for Regionalization," *Kitchener-Waterloo Record*, December 10, 1996, Final edition, sec. Opinion; Craig, "Regional Rumble - Some Municipal Leaders Think Merging Services Will Save Taxpayers Money. Others Feel It Won't and That Communities Will Be Weakened. Communities Can Do a Better Job of Saving Taxpayers Money"; Doug Craig, "Region Needs to Give Clear Facts on Future of Our Communities," *Kitchener-Waterloo Record*, September 25, 1998, Final edition, sec. Opinion; Doug Craig, "Record Presents Only One-Sided Arguments for Amalgamation," *Kitchener-Waterloo Record*, January 22, 1999, Final edition, sec. Opinion.

[128] Craig, "The Tri-City Model of Governance for Waterloo Region."

[129] Christian Aagaard, "Take Garbage and Buses, but Not Fire Department, Cambridge Tells Region," *Kitchener-Waterloo Record*, June 15, 1999, Final edition, sec. Front; Thompson, "Region Votes to Reinvent Itself; Council to Be Separate from Municipalities."

[130] Bob Burtt and Brian Caldwell, "Amalgamation Will Be Hot Topic for Regional Council," *Kitchener-Waterloo Record*, November 14, 2000, Final edition, sec. Local.

[131] Kevin Swayze, "Cambridge Mayor Defends Style," *Kitchener-Waterloo Record*, November 9, 2006, sec. Local; Jeff Outhit, "All Eyes on Tomorrow; These Leaders Have Been Elected to Guide Waterloo Region over

the overrepresentation of rural residents around the regional council table,[133] and push for representation by population.[134] More recently, he acknowledged that Cambridge separation wasn't going to happen, and eventually began to push for what he called a "new deal" that would strengthen the cities.[135]

Speaking to him today, it's clear that the fight against amalgamation is still important to him. "The reason we don't have a one-tier government, I say very proudly, is because I stepped in and said, 'I'm not going to stand for it.' So I fought amalgamation. I was the only person that ever did, on any strong basis, for years. From the very beginnings of the Mike Harris years. And it eventually got stopped."[136]

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the next Four Years. More than $1.3 Billion Worth of Plans Are Already in Place. What Will They Keep? What Will They Change?," *Kitchener-Waterloo Record*, November 18, 2006, sec. Front.

[132] Kevin Swayze, "Craig Likes Two Tiers; But Cities Need to Be Returned to Driver's Seat," *Kitchener-Waterloo Record*, December 14, 2007, Final edition, sec. Local; Doug Craig, "Mega-Mergers Left Us with a List of Mega-Failures," *Waterloo Region Record*, April 7, 2008, Final edition, sec. Opinion.

[133] As he tells me today, "This is a K-W region. So that's the problem here. You know, the townships just fall in line. They really do. They're overrepresented. You know? I mean, they get one vote for 12,000 people, my next door neighbour here [North Dumfries]. We have, you know – if I had the same number, the same per capita in Cambridge, I'd have 13 votes at the region, instead of three." Doug Craig, interview by author, Cambridge, ON.

[134] Karen Kawawada, "Doug Craig Announces He'll Run Again in Cambridge," *Kitchener-Waterloo Record*, August 31, 2006, Final edition, sec. Local; Doug Craig, "Urban Voters Shortchanged by Regional Councils," *Waterloo Region Record*, September 23, 2008, Final edition, sec. Opinion.

[135] Doug Craig, "Cities and Townships Need a 'New Deal' with the Region," *Waterloo Region Record*, September 18, 2012, First edition, sec. Editorial; Jeff Hicks, "Cambridge Wants 'New Deal' with Waterloo Region; Professor Advises City There's Precedent on Reclaiming Powers Lost in Amalgamation," *Waterloo Region Record*, May 23, 2013, First edition, sec. Local.

[136] Doug Craig, interview by author, Cambridge, ON.

It's clear that that the conflicts of that period, too, are still meaningful for Craig. "There's always been that conflict," he says of those days. "That lack of trust. And of course, they like to put it on me. I don't care, but you're not getting my municipality."[137]

The echoes of these fractious debates still resonate. It is through them that Craig's positions on LRT and smart growth must be understood.

Craig has been talking about shifting people out of their cars for a long time.[138] But he didn't support the regional takeover of transit service,[139] and now suggests that regional decision-making means some areas in Cambridge aren't being appropriately served by transit, because of the Region's focus on Kitchener and Waterloo.[140]

Craig was an early advocate of LRT and the central transit corridor, back in 2001 when the project was just starting to be seriously considered.[141] He argued that Cambridge needed to be included in plans for LRT,[142] and even seemed open to Cambridge being included in a second

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[137] Ibid.

[138] Christian Aagaard, "Transportation Plan Doesn't Measure up: Cambridge Councillor," *Kitchener-Waterloo Record*, February 16, 1999, Final edition, sec. Local; Mirko Petricevic, "Nowhere to Steer; Road Proposals Will Force Cambridge to Make Tough Choices," *Kitchener-Waterloo Record*, January 27, 2001, Final edition, sec. Perspectives; Carol Goodwin, "Needy May See Lower Fares; Region Considers Subsidizing Bus Fares for Low-Income Residents," *Kitchener-Waterloo Record*, March 23, 2001, Final edition, sec. Local.

[139] Thompson, "Region Votes to Reinvent Itself; Council to Be Separate from Municipalities."

[140] Doug Craig, interview by author, Cambridge, ON.

[141] Goodwin, "Needy May See Lower Fares; Region Considers Subsidizing Bus Fares for Low-Income Residents"; Rose Simone, "Transit Corridor Urged to Alleviate Gridlock," *Kitchener-Waterloo Record*, November 6, 2001, Final edition, sec. Local.

[142] Dave Pink, "Cambridge Riverfront Plan to Be High Priority: Mayor," *Kitchener-Waterloo Record*, September 17, 2002, Final edition, sec. Local.

phase of the project that would quickly follow the first.[143] In 2006, Craig told an election debate that "Light-rail transit was my idea."[144] Today, he tells me that he had pushed for early whims to be examined seriously. "I talked positively about the fact that we need to investigate rapid transit systems in the region," he says. "I was the first one that brought that up….That an initial study of talking about it needed to go beyond talking and start looking at it for the region."[145]

In 2004, Craig had been predicting he would see LRT on Hespeler Road.[146] In 2006, he was hopeful that LRT could launch in the next council term in Waterloo and Kitchener, and launch in Cambridge the term after that.[147] But by 2008, the project was still in early planning stages, and Craig was starting to express doubts about the growing cost of the project. He was also expressing concern that those rising costs would mean that LRT would not happen in Cambridge if it didn't happen there first.[148] By 2009, before the first approval vote, he was speaking out against trains,[149] and Cambridge City Council had ordered a consultant report[150]

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[143] Outhit, "Training Growth; Planners Say a Light Rail Line Could Be Used to Shape Development in Waterloo Region"; Dave Pink, "Hot Potato Report Returns; Regional Council Passes Study on Road Network back to Cambridge Councillors," *Kitchener-Waterloo Record*, May 30, 2003, Final edition, sec. Local.

[144] Swayze, "Cambridge Mayor Defends Style."

[145] Doug Craig, interview by author, Cambridge, ON.

[146] Dave Pink, "Urban Blight, Civic Offices Top Agenda," *Kitchener-Waterloo Record*, September 29, 2004, Final edition, sec. Local.

[147] Outhit, "All Eyes on Tomorrow; These Leaders Have Been Elected to Guide Waterloo Region over the next Four Years. More than $1.3 Billion Worth of Plans Are Already in Place. What Will They Keep?"

[148] Kevin Swayze, "Mayor Expresses Rapid Transit Doubts," *Waterloo Region Record*, October 2, 2008, Final edition, sec. Local.

[149] Outhit, "Cambridge Transit Gets Short Shrift, Mayor Says."

that would challenge regional staff's findings on the viability of LRT in Kitchener and Waterloo, instead advocating for rapid buses across the three cities.[151] "They've sent a very, very negative message to Cambridge that this is a second-class community,"[152] he said then, and he told regional staff that they needed an "option that treats all the cities the same."[153]

In 2009, Craig was the only regional councillor who voted against the choice to use light rail as the "preferred technology" for the new system.[154] When the funding shortfall became clear during the 2010 election, he again began pushing for a bus rapid transit system that could extend to Cambridge from the beginning.[155] He would continue to push for buses, and was

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[150] See Delcan, "Region of Waterloo Rapid Transit Environmental Assessment: Peer Review for City of Cambridge," June 19, 2009, http://www.cambridge.ca/cs_pubaccess/download_minutes.php%3Fdoc_id%3D5291&sa=U&ved=0CAUQFjAAah UKEwj0-uLIvYPHAhUEzIAKHZN-ChQ&client=internal-uds-cse&usg=AFQjCNHs-jqMdx2iuUeN93voyxYMH44E8w.

[151] Jeff Outhit, "Cambridge Calls for Rapid Transit Review," *Waterloo Region Record*, May 20, 2009, Final edition, sec. Local; Outhit, "Cambridge Report Boosts Buses; As Region's Vote on Rapid Transit Nears, Conflicting Reports Are Tabled."

[152] Outhit, "Cambridge Calls for Rapid Transit Review."

[153] Kevin Swayze, "Transit Plans 'Dismissive' of Cambridge, Mayor Says; Report Proposes Rapid Buses for City, Wants to See Increased Use before Committing to Light Rail," *Waterloo Region Record*, June 2, 2009, Final edition, sec. Local.

[154] Region of Waterloo, "Regional Council Minutes: Wednesday, June 24, 2009," 5.

[155] Outhit, "Cheaper Buses Plan Back in Spotlight"; Outhit, "Feds Give Transit Plan $265M Total Funding Is Still $235M Short of the $800M Projected for a System with Trains"; Outhit, "Candidates Beat up on Transit Plan"; Outhit, "Council Members Unsure about Rail Transit; City Councillors Say Voters Told Them They're Not Convinced by Plan."

frustrated that the process continued to favour LRT.[156] Yet he couldn't vote in the crucial

decision; Craig, along with Chair Seiling, had to declare a pecuniary interest because his son had

bought a property along the route.[157] The debate over the LRT project would conclude without

its biggest advocate and its biggest critic.

So it wasn't until 2014, nearly three years after the final approval of the project, that the

real showdown between Craig and Seiling would happen. After Craig arranged for a judge to

consider his pecuniary interest issue,[158] the judge ruled that the interest was "so remote, a

reasonable person would not expect it to influence his decision-making."[159] Seiling returned to

the debate a few months later.[160] So they were both around the table when Craig introduced his

motion to area rate the LRT project, and exclude Cambridge residents for paying for it.[161]

Most remarkable that night was the discord between Craig and Seiling. Seiling presented

the dollar value Cambridge taxpayers contribute compared to the cost of the services that are

provided in Cambridge, to show that Cambridge gets its fair share. Cambridge "has received

considerable support from the other municipalities with no objections, no recriminations, and no

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[156] Jeff Outhit, "Regional Politicians Sniping over Transit Plan," *Waterloo Region Record*, February 16,
2011, First edition, sec. News.

[157] Frances Barrick and Jeff Outhit, "Seiling Didn't Think of Transit Conflict; Regional Chair's Children
Own Property near Proposed Rapid Transit Stations," *Waterloo Region Record*, April 14, 2011, First edition, sec.
Local.

[158] Jeff Outhit, "Cambridge Mayor Wants Say in LRT; Doug Craig Going to Court to Seek Dismissal of
Conflict of Interest in Light Rail Debate," *Waterloo Region Record*, June 12, 2013, First edition, sec. News.

[159] Desmond, "Cambridge Mayor Back in Rapid Transit Debate."

[160] Davis, "Seiling Will No Longer Declare Conflict on LRT."

[161] Region of Waterloo, "Regional Council Minutes: Wednesday, March 19, 2014."

suggestions of area-rating," Seiling said.[162] "Whipping up anti-region sentiment may serve the interests of some, but it does not reflect the reality of how regional dollars are spent and how Cambridge has been treated," Seiling said.[163] Craig felt that Seiling's list, and the invocation of it by other councillors, was off-topic and inappropriate. "I believe that the area rating motion should be judged on the merits that's on the table. Not on the nonsense from the regional chair."[164]

For many, that night was difficult to watch. Such nights were rare by the 2010 to 2014 council term. But they were much more common in the 1990s, and the conflict between Doug Craig and Ken Seiling goes back that far, as well.

Seiling's support for a single-tier system in the Harris years was and is a sore point with Craig.[165] "Ken Seiling … supported an amalgamated region," he tells me. "We were really up against the wall in a lot of respects."[166] In 1995, Seiling was part of an early submission by the Regional Chairs of Ontario that proposed single-tier governments "whenever possible."[167] Craig

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[162] Ken Seiling, "Cambridge Has Been Well-Served by the Region," *Waterloo Region Record*, March 22, 2014, First edition, sec. Editorial.

[163] Region of Waterloo, *Regional Council - March 19, 2014*.

[164] Ibid.

[165] Seiling described his position to me as somewhat more flexible than Craig characterizes it. "I was open to either a much more rationalized two-tier system or a single tier system. So, I mean, I could live with either." Ken Seiling, interview by author, Kitchener, ON.

[166] Doug Craig, interview by author, Cambridge, ON.

[167] Regional Chairs of Ontario, "In Pursuit of Better Government: The Provincial/Regional Partnership in the Areas of Service Responsibility, Governance and Financing," October 1995.

responded by advancing a motion at regional council in favour of two-tier government,[168] and by

writing his own response report that was nearly as long as the original.[169]

Craig would continue to push back against Seiling and the others on regional reform. It

went on for years. And much of that conflict was clearly visible to the public. As Craig wrote in

The Record in 1998,

> What does Seiling want from all the lower-tier municipalities in his plan? He wants
> our fire services, our economic development, our transit, our sewer and water, our
> ability to plan by taking away our official plan, and he wants to separate the councils
> that will eventually set up the final stage for one-tier government.
> How does Seiling propose to do this? He is going to use the threat of provincial
> intervention while he chips away one service at a time until communities like
> Kitchener, Cambridge and Waterloo are left with only dog tags and cemeteries.
> The whole concept of reform, while in essence a worthwhile exercise, was skewed
> from the very beginning towards the centralization of all services.[170]

The Record reported a long series of difficult debates featuring the two in those days, including

an incident in which Craig "exploded in rage" after Seiling's remarks and criticized his

leadership before Craig "stormed out of the meeting."[171]

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[168] Bob Burtt, "Seiling Criticized over Report : Councillors Upset with Chairmen's Study Recommending More Powers for Region," *Kitchener-Waterloo Record*, October 27, 1995, Final edition, sec. Local.

[169] Doug Craig, "In Pursuit of the Best Government," November 13, 1995.

[170] Craig, "Regional Rumble - Some Municipal Leaders Think Merging Services Will Save Taxpayers Money. Others Feel It Won't and That Communities Will Be Weakened. Communities Can Do a Better Job of Saving Taxpayers Money."

[171] "I'm saying to you that you've had the worst government in the past 10 years in terms of tax increases," Craig reportedly told him. "We should have been finding the savings right here and you haven't provided the leadership." Kevin Crowley, "Amalgamation Talk Sparks Furore Region Needs to Cut Its Costs, Cambridge Councillor Says as He Storms from Meeting," *Kitchener-Waterloo Record*, April 30, 1998, Final edition, sec. Local.

For Doug Craig, then, LRT was just the most recent in a long series of slights against Cambridge in the regional family. And the conflict over area rating was just the most recent flashpoint between Doug Craig and Ken Seiling.[172]

Craig's position on LRT was rooted in his beliefs about Cambridge and regional government. So was his position on smart growth. Craig spoke of smart growth often in the early 2000s,[173] when the term was gaining popularity in Ontario. He publically opposed sprawl, talked about a future of carless downtowns, and supported the province's work on the Growth Plan.[174]

But Craig's concern for smart growth was closely tied to his desire to maintain Cambridge's distinct identity in the region. During the creation of the Regional Growth

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[172] Craig can still put his rocky relationship with Chair Seiling in perspective. "I think it was unfortunate he took sides on the amalgamation debate. That's all. I think that caused a lot of angst. But if you wanted someone to represent you politically, at Queen's Park or Ottawa, he's the perfect person. You know? I'm fully supportive of that. He represents the community very well." Doug Craig, interview by author, Cambridge, ON.

[173] Terry Pender, "Region Supports Big-Box Centre," *Kitchener-Waterloo Record*, August 23, 2001, Final edition, sec. Local; Doug Craig, "Let's Bring the Architectural School to Cambridge," *Kitchener-Waterloo Record*, October 15, 2001, Final edition, sec. Opinion; Christian Aagaard, "Fairway Road Extension Could Be a Sore Point," *Kitchener-Waterloo Record*, June 13, 2002, Final edition, sec. Local; Pink, "Cambridge Riverfront Plan to Be High Priority"; Doug Craig, "Smart Growth Will Enhance Our Communities," *Kitchener-Waterloo Record*, January 10, 2003, Final edition, sec. INSIGHT.

[174] Rose Simone, "Breslau Area Targeted for Long-Term Growth," *Kitchener-Waterloo Record*, April 19, 2002, Final edition, sec. Local; Brian Caldwell, "The Big Question? Where We'll Live; Density Is the Buzzword of Planners Trying to Curb Waterloo Region's Urban Sprawl," *Kitchener-Waterloo Record*, September 21, 2002, Final edition, sec. Perspectives; Jeff Outhit, "Ontario Promises Cash for Rail Plan; Long-Term Growth Report Gets Top Marks from Local Leaders," *Kitchener-Waterloo Record*, July 14, 2004, Final edition, sec. Front.

Management Strategy, he pushed for a "rural guard"[175] that would not be developed between Cambridge and the cities to the north, to maintain a clear separation between communities, unlike what has happened to the communities west of Toronto.[176] Sprawl would mean loss of identity for Cambridge.

When I ask him about that rural separation he wanted, but that was not included in the final RGMS, he tells me about Kitchener's various attempts to annex Cambridge land, which go back a number of decades. "They've always had this attitude that they should run everything," he says. "And that has gone right up through [former mayor] Carl Zehr, who wanted a one-tier government ….as long as it was in Kitchener and they ran it. So there's always been this conflict."[177]

Craig's more recent views on smart growth are still connected to Cambridge's identity. He's pushed for intensification, but he wants it on low-density, car-heavy Hespeler Road, rather than in historic Galt, where the province designated Cambridge's urban growth centre.[178] "High-

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[175] Rose Simone, "City Seeks Input into Region's Plans for Future Growth," *Kitchener-Waterloo Record*, March 22, 2002, Final edition, sec. Local.

[176] Bob Burtt, "Concentrate Growth in Developed Areas, Planning Chief Says," *Kitchener-Waterloo Record*, March 8, 2002, Final edition, sec. Local; Outhit, "Region's Vision for Future under Fire"; Simone, "City Seeks Input into Region's Plans for Future Growth."

[177] Doug Craig, interview by author, Cambridge, ON.

[178] Kevin Swayze, "Yikes!; Rethinking the Hespeler Road Strip - It Can Be Done, Planners Say," *Kitchener-Waterloo Record*, February 19, 2005, Final edition, sec. Perspectives; Outhit, "Region's Growth Fast-Tracked; Population to Hit 729,000 by 2031 -- 10 Years Earlier than Expected"; Kevin Swayze, "City Tries to Balance Growth, Height Caps; Galt Grapples with Building Limits and Ontario Plan to Add 42,000 Residents to Core," *Kitchener-Waterloo Record*, July 6, 2007, sec. Local.

rises on the periphery of the Galt downtown are fine," he tells me. "High-rises along Highway 24 as you come into Cambridge are fine. But in our historic town areas, we've got to be careful."[179]

But while he supports intensification, Craig is not a defender of the long-term or permanent intentions of the Countryside Line and Protected Countryside. He thinks the Countryside Line should be "reviewed every five years …. same as the official plan," but that changes shouldn't be allowed between five-year reviews. "The development industry needs to have rules that we live by," he says, and "now we live with it for five years." Even the Protected Countryside, which the Regional Official Plan intends to be permanent, will be changed eventually, Craig tells me. "That's going to change over time. That'll change with governments. But at least it's not out of control in terms of just all kinds of expansion taking place."[180]

I'm curious about what he hears from constituents, as mayor or as a regional councillor, on growth planning. "People only think of a community in terms of their neighborhood…. And if the bulldozer shows up one day, they want to say, well why did you let that happen?" he explains. "When you have an official plan meeting to change the whole official plan of a city, you invite everyone in the community to come out. And approximately 30 people will show up. Of which 28 of them are developers. That's the reality."[181]

I ask him about the pressure elected officials face from developers to acquiesce to their plans. "I don't feel pressured whatsoever," he replies. "To some extent, [developers] will always come in asking for more of what they want, more. And we just have to say, well, you know, what's good for the public?"[182]

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[179] Doug Craig, interview by author, Cambridge, ON.

[180] Ibid.

[181] Ibid.

[182] Ibid.

Despite his desire for flexibility at stated intervals in the Regional Official Plan, Craig

didn't appreciate the OMB ruling, which he described publically as a "huge defeat" at the

time.[183] It's yet another example of the province interfering in local governments. "It's absurd. It

really is," he says. "[The] province needs to get out of running cities. They can't run the

province. They sure as hell can't run the cities." He'd like to see the OMB abolished altogether.

"Municipal councils have been hamstrung for years on the OMB issue," he tells me.[184]

On the appeal of the ruling, though, Craig expresses mixed feelings. "I'm a supporter of

the Region's official plan. I was not quite a supporter of how they went about challenging the

OMB about different things. I thought that was wrong." He thought the Region should have

compromised much earlier, and included more land in its original plan for urban expansion. "I

think we could have avoided a lot of issues."[185]

Craig tells me he was "mainly" satisfied with the final resolution. "Every good

agreement, every good compromise, no one's happy," he explains. "And it was a good

compromise." He wasn't thrilled about some of the land set to be expanded on the west side of

Cambridge, but he's reassured that area municipal control over water and sewer servicing means

the City of Cambridge will decide if and when that expansion will actually occur. "We'll allow it

to come in, but we control the water and sewer. So we will control when it happens."[186]

When Craig talks about Cambridge and the Region, it's clear that these conflicts are still

top-of-mind for him. Yet despite the still recent re-opening of old wounds between Cambridge

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[183] Paige Desmond, "Subdivision Ruling Not Good News for Landlocked Waterloo," *Waterloo Region Record*, January 25, 2013, First edition, sec. Local.

[184] Doug Craig, interview by author, Cambridge, ON.

[185] Ibid.

[186] Ibid.

and the Region, and between Craig and Seiling, over LRT, he seems to be more hopeful about the regional family than perhaps he was in the past. "There's been a bitterness between Cambridge and the Region," he tells me, but "I think it has quieted down quite a bit. Because the ambitions, the overt ambitions of one-tier governments are gone."[187] Craig is encouraged by the direction the new 2014 to 2018 council has taken, with new mayors in Waterloo and Kitchener. He sees lots of collaboration between the area municipalities, and tells me about the inter-municipal agreements that are in place. "We're here to be supportive of our neighbors. I've made that clear over and over again. We just don't want to be absorbed by our neighbor."[188]

Jane Brewer

Doug Craig's story is about a long history of disrespect for Cambridge, channeled through the fractious fights of the 1990s. But another set of eyes saw those days quite differently. And those eyes were around the regional council table in the 2010 to 2014 council term, too.

I drive cautiously through the aftermath of a snowstorm to meet Jane Brewer at her home in Cambridge on a blustery January day. Now 91,[189] Brewer was set to run for her regional council seat again in the 2014 election, but she decided to pull out fairly late in the election. She had been diagnosed with peripheral neuropathy.[190] "I registered the last time to run," she tells me. "And I woke up one morning, a few days after, and thought, what am I doing? And that's when I decided. You know, it was four years and … it's a lot."[191]

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[187] Ibid.

[188] Ibid.

[189] Jane Brewer, interview by author, Cambridge, ON, January 18, 2016.

[190] Paige Desmond, "Race Heats up with One Month to Local Election," *Waterloo Region Record*, September 27, 2014, sec. News.

[191] Jane Brewer, interview by author, Cambridge, ON.

It was too late, though, to take her name off the ballot. She asked everyone not to vote for her. But she got more than 4000 votes, beating two of the six people running for Cambridge's two regional council seats.[192] Their reaction was understandable. Cambridge residents have been voting for Brewer since the 1970s.

Brewer moved to Preston at the age of three, to live with family when her mother died.[193] "I grew up in a family where we talked politics," she says. Her grandfather was a mayor, and her uncle was an MP and MPP.[194] But it was a change in her personal circumstances that brought her to Cambridge City Council in 1978.[195] "I went through a painful divorce," she explains. "And friends decided that I needed something, and that my lean was certainly towards politics. So they got the form and filled it out, got the 10 signatures. And I was on the ballot. And I've never looked back."[196]

After a decade as a city councillor, she served 12 years as Cambridge's mayor,[197] representing the city through the fractious Harris years and its amalgamation debates. After supporting the move to separate the councils,[198] due in part to the large amount of work that

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[192] Paige Desmond, "Regional Councillors Say 'Thanks for the Memories,'" *Waterloo Region Record*, November 21, 2014, sec. News.

[193] Christian Aagaard, "Mayor Balances Many Roles : Family and Church Give Strength for Busy Public Life," *Kitchener-Waterloo Record*, December 5, 1994, Final edition, sec. Front.

[194] Jane Brewer, interview by author, Cambridge, ON.

[195] Desmond, "Regional Councillors Say 'Thanks for the Memories.'"

[196] Jane Brewer, interview by author, Cambridge, ON.

[197] Monteiro, "Stepping Down, but Not Ready to Leave; After 12 Years as Cambridge Mayor, Brewer to Run for Regional Council."

[198] Thompson, "Region Votes to Reinvent Itself; Council to Be Separate from Municipalities."

regional council was becoming for those on the local-tier councils,[199] she left the mayor's chair in 2000 to run for one of the new directly-elected Cambridge seats on regional council.[200]

As mayor in the 1990s, Brewer worked to rationalize the two-tier system to keep the provincial government from stepping in. She signed on to the reform package the region's mayors put forward,[201] and she took a great deal of flak from her council for doing it.[202]

In many ways, Brewer fought to take a middle position. She pushed back against those at the Region who wanted a single-tier system.[203] But she also fended off those at her own city council who were pushing for Cambridge to become its own single-tier city.[204] "[R]egional governments are here to stay," she insisted.[205] She hoped that a local two-tier rationalization could keep the province from meddling.[206]

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[199] Christian Aagaard, "Back to the Drawing Board; Region Ponders next Step after Cities Reject Reform Proposals," *Kitchener-Waterloo Record*, June 16, 1999, Cambridge edition, sec. Local.

[200] Burtt and Caldwell, "Amalgamation Will Be Hot Topic for Regional Council."

[201] Brewer et al., "Regional Reform in Waterloo Region."

[202] John Size and Christian Aagaard, "Waterloo Divided on Regional Structure," *Kitchener-Waterloo Record*, April 9, 1999, Final edition, sec. Local; Rose Simone and John Size, "Talk Isn't Cheap for Region Reform Hearings," *Kitchener-Waterloo Record*, April 27, 1999, Cambridge edition, sec. Local.

[203] Aagaard, "Take Garbage and Buses, but Not Fire Department, Cambridge Tells Region."

[204] Monteiro, "Stepping Down, but Not Ready to Leave; After 12 Years as Cambridge Mayor, Brewer to Run for Regional Council"; Burtt and Caldwell, "Amalgamation Will Be Hot Topic for Regional Council."

[205] John Size, "Mayors Cautious about Likelihood of Regional Reform," *Kitchener-Waterloo Record*, May 21, 1999, Final edition, sec. Local.

[206] Brian Caldwell and Catherine Thompson, "Starting Positions; Regional Council Members Offer Mixed Reviews on Mayors' Reform Proposals," *Kitchener-Waterloo Record*, April 15, 1999, Cambridge edition, sec. Local.

Yet Brewer's position on regional reform wasn't just strategic. She takes a more measured view of regional government than her successor does. "Mayor Craig and I never did agree on regional government," she explains. "I always felt that regional government was serving a very useful purpose, and the misunderstanding in Cambridge was the loss of identity. And the feeling that Kitchener gets everything. I didn't see that."[207]

While Craig thinks the Region is dominated by Kitchener and Waterloo, and that this has hurt Cambridge, Brewer disagrees. She has consistently said that she hasn't seen block voting at regional council,[208] that her voice was heard by those from other parts of the region,[209] and that Cambridge has done well.[210] "The money was divided pretty well by population," she tells me. "We've been well treated." And she thinks that people focus on "hard services" like physical infrastructure, and underestimate the value of the services like public health provided by the Region. "If you were to get out of that, you'd be paying the cost because you would have to have a health department, and all of those things are being well done now."[211]

But despite her longstanding assessment that the Region works well for Cambridge, she has plenty of experience dealing with the strong feelings behind the anger toward the Region.

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[207] Jane Brewer, interview by author, Cambridge, ON.

[208] Dave Pink, "Waterloo Region's Political Zipper Is given a Tug," *Kitchener-Waterloo Record*, May 24, 2003, Final edition, sec. Perspectives.

[209] Jeff Outhit, "Regional Council Race Has Star Power; One Retirement and Increased Interest in Regional Politics Bring out Many Worthy Candidates," *Kitchener-Waterloo Record*, November 7, 2003, Final edition, sec. Local.

[210] Jeff Outhit, "Cambridge Badly Treated' Two Regional Council Candidates Argue City Has Been Shortchanged by the Region," *Waterloo Region Record*, August 5, 2010, Final edition, sec. Local.

[211] Jane Brewer, interview by author, Cambridge, ON.

She tells me there are still people who see themselves as being from Preston, Hespeler, or Galt. "They feel that they had their identity taken away from them to become Cambridge," she says. She tells me about a planning meeting years ago. "A gentleman came to the podium and said, 'I was looking for a small place to live. And I chose Hespeler,'" she recalls. "When you move to Kitchener, you move to an area – you know, a street. In Cambridge there was still that strong feeling, well, I live in Galt or I live in Preston."[212]

Just as Brewer sees Cambridge's relationship with the Region differently, she saw LRT differently, too. Her stance on the project over time was, in some ways, comparable to that taken by most of her colleagues in the other two cities. She was supportive of starting LRT in Kitchener and Waterloo from the early days, and ran on a promise to work for extension to Cambridge.[213] While she voted against the two-stage implementation in 2009 that would start the project in Kitchener and Waterloo, she voted for all other aspects of the proposal, including the choice to use light rail as the preferred technology.[214] She backed away somewhat from LRT during the 2010 election after the funding announcements,[215] and she thought the first report of the 2011 review was, as The Record paraphrased, "tilted unfairly toward trains."[216] But she was

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[212] Ibid.

[213] Pink, "Waterloo Region's Political Zipper Is given a Tug"; "Brewer Running for Regional Council," *Kitchener-Waterloo Record*, July 12, 2003, Final edition, sec. Local.

[214] Region of Waterloo, "Regional Council Minutes: Wednesday, June 24, 2009."

[215] Outhit, "Candidates Beat up on Transit Plan"; Outhit, "Buses Are Back on the Table; Regional Council Worries Cost of Light-Rail Plan Will Be Prohibitive."

[216] Outhit, "Regional Politicians Sniping over Transit Plan."

also in front of Cambridge City Council explaining that a subsequent report[217] recommended that

Cambridge should get LRT eventually. "The report clearly indicates that Cambridge will get

light rail, but it's a phasing in," she told her unimpressed listeners.[218]

But this was to be Brewer's last major move on the major LRT decision. A few weeks

later, at the age of 87, Brewer was in a serious car crash. She would be unable to return to

regional council for the crucial vote.[219] In her absence, Chair Wideman would share some of

Brewer's comments: that she supported the motions on the table, and bringing LRT to

Cambridge.[220] The paper would later report that she said she would have supported the

motion.[221]

Given her absence, I want to know how she describes her final position on LRT. "I

always felt that the region had come of age," she says. "And that looking to the future, if we

want to get the cars off the road, and not have to spend millions and millions of dollars on

roads… then LRT was the answer." She says that people are focusing on costs, but not on the

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[217] Nancy Button and Thomas Schmidt, "Preliminary Preferred Rapid Transit Implementation Option,"

Transportation and Environmental Services (Region, April 12, 2011),

http://www.rapidtransit.regionofwaterloo.ca/en/multimedialibrary/resources/rtpreliminaryimplementationoptionrepo

rt.pdf.

[218] Kevin Swayze, "Cambridge Council Trashes Region's Plan for Light Rail Transit," *Waterloo Region

Record*, April 19, 2011, First edition, sec. News.

[219] Jeff Outhit, "Brewer Eyes August Return to Council," *Waterloo Region Record*, June 11, 2011, First

edition, sec. Local.

[220] Region of Waterloo, "Regional Council Minutes: Wednesday, June 15, 2011," June 15, 2011, 13.

[221] Paige Desmond, "Region Faces Pivotal Vote on LRT; Twelve Years after Pitch for 'Transformational

Project,' Council to Vote on Construction Contract," *Waterloo Region Record*, March 1, 2014, First edition, sec.

News.

benefits. And they're used to the convenience of their cars. "But you know, we can't continue to … build the roads," she tells me.[222]

But what about the phasing that had so infuriated Mayor Craig? "We did not have the ridership on the buses to start the LRT," she explains. Kitchener and Waterloo did. Brewer attributes Cambridge's relatively low transit ridership to the budget cuts made by Cambridge City Council to Cambridge Transit before the Region took over service.[223] She had said as much during a 2014 committee meeting.[224] "The guys didn't like being named," she tells me, chuckling, of the three members of that former Cambridge Council who were at that regional committee meeting. "It was just a fluke that they were all there that same night."[225]

Unlike Craig, Brewer thinks LRT to Cambridge will happen. "Probably not in my time," she says. "But I think … down the road." In 2012, she argued that Cambridge would need financial support from Kitchener and Waterloo to get LRT, so she opposed area rating the project to keep Cambridge taxpayers from contributing to the costs.[226] "I've always felt that we're going to be paying for LRT," she tells me. "And when it gets built, then Kitchener and Waterloo will

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[222] Jane Brewer, interview by author, Cambridge, ON.

[223] Ibid.

[224] Region of Waterloo, "Planning and Works Committee Minutes: Tuesday, March 4, 2014"; Region of Waterloo, *Planning and Works Committee Meeting - Part 2 - Tuesday, March 4, 2014* (Kitchener, ON, 2014), http://view.earthchannel.com/PlayerController.aspx?&PGD=waterlooonca&eID=161.

[225] Jane Brewer, interview by author, Cambridge, ON.

[226] Jeff Outhit, "Cambridge Feels Transit Share Unfair; City on the Hook for Rapid Trains It Isn't Getting," *Waterloo Region Record*, January 20, 2012, First edition, sec. Local.

be paying for LRT. Many of the people will not be here who paid for it. But that's … the way it works."[227]

In 2014, when she opposed Craig's renewed area rating motion, it was for the same reason.[228] Her remarks that night were in stark contrast to Craig's. She agreed with Seiling's assessment that Cambridge does well in the Region. "I'm sorry that we have come to this. That we're not prepared to pay our fair share," she told the meeting. "And I feel badly that I've been put in this position, but at the same time I recognize that someday it would happen at this table."[229]

Brewer's relationship with Chair Seiling fits with her sensibilities about regional government. In fact, it was Brewer who nominated Seiling as regional chair in 1985.[230] "He was the mayor of Woolwich," she explains, "and I found him to be a very solid, good politician." She approves of the work he's done as regional chair. "He hasn't favored any one group, and I'm very supportive of the decisions that he's helped to formulate."[231]

One of those decisions is the Regional Official Plan. She supports urban growth boundaries. "I think that the cities tend to want to hear, you know, the possibility of extending their boundaries. I haven't heard that as much in Cambridge," she says. She thinks it was mostly Kitchener that wanted to expand, as it was facing pressure from landowners on the southwest corner that Cambridge didn't face. "I think I leaned more towards the townships than I did

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[227] Jane Brewer, interview by author, Cambridge, ON.

[228] Region of Waterloo, "Regional Council Minutes: Wednesday, March 19, 2014," 8.

[229] Region of Waterloo, *Regional Council - March 19, 2014*.

[230] Jeff Outhit, "Seiling Hits Milestone," *Kitchener-Waterloo Record*, December 15, 2005, Final edition, sec. Local.

[231] Jane Brewer, interview by author, Cambridge, ON.

towards the City of Kitchener," she explains. "I think we need to protect the farmland, and we weren't protecting it by … allowing it to be developed as they wanted. You can drive along 401 and see what happened with farmland in Mississauga. And I don't think that's what we intended." She's seen some of those problems in her own community. Farmland on the west side of Cambridge that is turning into residential neighbourhoods under older planning, based on municipal boundaries rather than smart growth, has caused frustration for residents and traffic problems.[232]

In supporting the official plan, Brewer supported the decision to appeal the OMB ruling. "I don't think we had any choice," she says. "How the developers came up with the figure they did [for urban expansion], I have no idea." As for the various OMB members who hear appeals, "I sometimes wondered if they really knew the rules."[233] She wasn't "particularly happy" with how much land the Region had to give up to settle the dispute, "but it sort of settled the argument."[234]

I want to know what she thinks about planning and regional government. "I've always had the feeling that we did good planning here," she tells me. She thinks the Region and the area municipalities have had good planning commissioners, and that "there wasn't the infighting that you find in other locations" between the different governments. "How would you like to come up against Mississauga?" she asks me. Hazel McCallion fought hard for her municipality, she says. "She's a fine lady, you know." But in Waterloo Region, "I've felt that all of the mayors were strong for their municipalities. But they also recognized the overall picture."

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[232] Ibid.

[233] Ibid.

[234] Ibid.

After 36 straight years as a municipal politician in Cambridge, Brewer has a good sense of what it's like to deal with constituents. When it comes to planning, she tells me, "not a lot of people take an interest in attending many meetings about the official plan." While there was more interest at the city level than the regional level, even at public meetings for the city official plan, there were commonly more members of staff at the meetings than members of the public. For constituents, she tells me, participating on these questions requires work. "I'm not sure that most people really worry about it," she says. "Because they have elected you to look after their interests. And they can always get in touch with you."[235]

It's clear from speaking with her that Brewer truly enjoyed her political life. Looking back on her initial choice to run in 1978, she tells me, "It was one of the best decisions that I made for Jane. And I hope that people think that it was a good decision for Cambridge."[236]

Claudette Millar

Doug Craig and Jane Brewer were two strong mayoral voices on regional council in 2010 to 2014. But they weren't alone. Claudette Millar was the third Cambridge mayor to become part of regional council in recent years, joining Craig and Brewer in 2003 until her retirement in 2014.[237] But she will always be the first mayor of Cambridge.

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[235] Ibid.

[236] Ibid.

[237] Jeff Outhit, "Regional Council Looks a Lot like the Old One," *Kitchener-Waterloo Record*, November 11, 2003, Final edition, sec. Local; Paige Desmond, "Long-Term Municipal Politicians Wind down Final Mandates; Kitchener and Waterloo Mayors among Those Leaving," *Waterloo Region Record*, October 28, 2014, First edition, sec. News.

I can't speak with Claudette Millar now. She died in February of 2016, of stomach cancer, at the age of 81.[238] But both the written record and her colleagues make clear that the City of Cambridge was at the heart of her political life.

Millar was born in Belleville in 1935, and moved to Kitchener with her family in the late 1940s.[239] She became mayor of Preston in 1969 at the age of 34,[240] having never served on a municipal council. "I had never been in a council chambers in my life," she recalled upon her retirement.[241] She was the youngest woman mayor in Canada back then. But it was hardly the first time she was ahead of the curve; at 16, in 1951, she was the youngest woman to get a pilot's license in Canada.[242] "She was a real iconoclast," Doug Craig told me.[243]

During the regional amalgamation that created Cambridge, Millar would run to be mayor of the new municipality. The mayor of Galt was the favourite to win, but two Galt candidates split the vote and Millar won with 43 percent.[244] As mayor, she sat on the very first regional

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[238] Record Staff, "Memorial Service Planned for Claudette Millar," *Waterloo Region Record*, February 17, 2016, First edition, sec. Local.

[239] "Region Hall of Fame: 2015 Inductees," *Waterloo Region Museum*, accessed November 18, 2016, http://www.waterlooregionmuseum.com/region-hall-of-fame/2015-inductees/.

[240] Christian Aagaard and Joel Rubinoff, "Ex-Mayor Claudette Miller Seeks Cambridge Nomination," *Kitchener-Waterloo Record*, January 6, 1999, Final edition, sec. Local.

[241] Desmond, "Regional Councillors Say 'Thanks for the Memories.'"

[242] Aagaard and Rubinoff, "Ex-Mayor Claudette Miller Seeks Cambridge Nomination."

[243] Doug Craig, interview by author, Cambridge, ON.

[244] Dave Pink, "Old Spats Fade Away; No Longer the Region's 'Poor Cousin,' Cambridge Will Turn 30 on Jan. 1," *Kitchener-Waterloo Record*, December 28, 2002, Final edition, sec. Perspectives.

council. She left after her first term in 1974,[245] but returned in 1978, and again served as mayor until 1988.[246]

"She was not a fan of the regional government," Doug Craig told me, "and Claudette would've said that sitting here."[247] His comments are consistent with her own comments upon her retirement from regional council. "Quite frankly, I think Cambridge has been badly treated, but that's my opinion and I don't think it stands alone," she told the Cambridge Times.[248]

Millar was concerned with Cambridge's autonomy.[249] She opposed the separation of the councils throughout her time with the Region.[250] And when she ran for regional council in 2003, she opposed Jane Brewer's longstanding support for separated councils, instead arguing that the Region should function more like a service board.[251] Both Brewer and Craig were incumbents in 2003, yet she announced her decision to run by saying, "we need a strong voice for Cambridge at

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[245] The Record once noted that Millar planned to run to be a councillor in the 1974 election, but missed the deadline to submit her nomination papers. Ibid.

[246] Ibid.

[247] Doug Craig, interview by author, Cambridge, ON.

[248] Bill Jackson, "Cambridge 'Badly Treated', Says Outgoing Regional Councillor Claudette Millar," *Cambridge Times*, October 1, 2014, http://www.cambridgetimes.ca/news-story/4889278-cambridge-badly-treated-says-outgoing-regional-councillor-claudette-millar/.

[249] "Regional Councillors for Cambridge (Two to Be Elected)," *Kitchener-Waterloo Record*, November 8, 2003, Final edition, sec. Local.

[250] Outhit, "New Regional Councillors Argue for Restoring Old Links with Cities"; Jackson, "Cambridge 'Badly Treated', Says Outgoing Regional Councillor Claudette Millar."

[251] Outhit, "Regional Council Looks a Lot like the Old One."

the region and I don't feel we've had that."[252] "There is a sense of us and them," she said of Cambridge's regional and city representatives, "And there is a prevailing attitude at the region that they know best. And they don't always know best."[253]

It's fair to assume that her days defending her nascent city from the Region influenced her views on the regional family. Those early years were difficult. "It's a big deal to lose your small municipality identity. It's not easy," she explained of that time. "Everybody was from the old scene and we were all in a position to recognize what was required. We recognized the enormity of what we had to do and we did not want to fail."[254] And she knew that, as Cambridge's first mayor, a great deal of the responsibility would rest with her. The provincial minister in those days had said, "Millar, I'm going to tell you right now, if this doesn't work it's your fault," as she recalled.[255]

Over the course of her career, Millar gained more land use planning experience than a casual observer might notice. She spent the 1990s as a member of the Ontario Municipal Board,[256] hearing appeals across Ontario. And it was a planning fight that had brought her into politics in the first place. She opposed a 1960s-era proposal for a 35,000-person development in

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[252] "Longtime Mayor Seeks Seat on Regional Council," *Kitchener-Waterloo Record*, August 26, 2003, Final edition, sec. Local.

[253] Jeff Outhit, "Waterloo Region: Monster or Model?," *Kitchener-Waterloo Record*, October 31, 2003, Final edition, sec. Local.

[254] Pink, "Old Spats Fade Away; No Longer the Region's 'Poor Cousin,' Cambridge Will Turn 30 on Jan. 1."

[255] Jackson, "Cambridge 'Badly Treated', Says Outgoing Regional Councillor Claudette Millar."

[256] Aagaard and Rubinoff, "Ex-Mayor Claudette Miller Seeks Cambridge Nomination"; "Longtime Mayor Seeks Seat on Regional Council."

the historic Blair area where she lived. Angered, she ran for mayor, and chipped away at the

existing approvals and controls, shrinking the project to 11,000 residents.[257] So she became

mayor of Preston.[258] "Growth issues were huge for her," Todd Cowan told me.[259]

Much of Millar's concern with planning was tied to her environmentalism. "She was an

environmentalist even before that was a word," Jane Brewer said upon Millar's death.[260] Millar

served on the Grand River Conservation Authority, and advocated for the GRCA to take a

tougher line with municipalities to make more progress on improving water quality.[261] She

pushed for the ESLs to cover the Dumfries Conservation Area,[262] and ran on expanding the ESLs

in 2006, identifying environmental protection as her top priority.[263] She once told a public

meeting of planners working on a bypass road around Galt that threatened environmentally

sensitive lands in Blair that she would, as another attendee recounted, "lay down in front of any

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[257] Carol Goodwin, "Blast Neighborhood Faced Earlier Battles," *Kitchener-Waterloo Record*, May 7, 1997, Final edition, sec. Local.

[258] "Region Hall of Fame: 2015 Inductees."

[259] Todd Cowan, interview by author, Waterloo, ON, February 1, 2016.

[260] "Officials Reflect on the Life of Cambridge's First Mayor, Claudette Millar," *Cambridge Times*, February 16, 2016, Final edition, sec. News.

[261] Bob Burtt, "We're All Polluting Grand, Expert Says; Conservation Authority Pollution Study Blames Urban Growth and Mega-Farms," *Kitchener-Waterloo Record*, August 18, 2004, Final edition, sec. Local.

[262] Bob Burtt, "Dumfries Not Included in Protected Landscape," *Kitchener-Waterloo Record*, January 25, 2006, Final edition, sec. Local.

[263] "Claudette Millar Seeks Another Term on Council," *Kitchener-Waterloo Record*, September 9, 2006, Final edition, sec. LOCAL.

bulldozer that tries to turn the soil in building this road." [264] Doug Craig told me his commitment

to the environment was "something I learned from Claudette Millar."[265]

What Millar said about growth management often came back to the environment. She

expressed support for the Region's official plan in 2012, as the original appeal dragged on at the

OMB, and as was often the case, her comments focused on environmental concerns. "A lot of the

land is wetlands that need to be taken care of," she said.[266] She was concerned that the Board

might force changes to the plan. "In an ideal world for the region [it] will turn out just as

written," she explained, noting that "the amount of residential development is a major issue."[267]

Sometimes Millar's commitment to the environment dovetailed with her commitment to

Cambridge within the regional system, like when she ran for re-election to regional council in

2006 promising, "I will continue to watchdog and continue to influence, hopefully, the region's

environmental activities, or lack thereof."[268] But on one of the biggest disputes of the 2010 to

2014 council term, her environmentalism and her commitment to Cambridge were at odds.

Claudette Millar supported LRT. When she ran for regional council for the first time in

2003, her comments on LRT were a bit tepid, suggesting that the focus should first be to

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[264] Gowing, Walter, "Former Mayor Claudette Millar Was 'a Real Fighter,'" *Cambridge Times*, March 2, 2016, Final edition, sec. Community.

[265] Doug Craig, interview by author, Cambridge, ON.

[266] Paige Desmond, "Region to Face Developers over Land Use Plan," *Waterloo Region Record*, June 7, 2012, First edition, sec. Local.

[267] Ibid.

[268] Jeff Outhit, "Big Guns Running for Regional Council; 4 Challengers Have Tough Fight against Brewer and Millar, Both Former Mayors," *Kitchener-Waterloo Record*, November 9, 2006, sec. Local.

"improve what we already have."[269] But by the 2006 election, she was pushing for rapid transit, because "I am not prepared to see roads damage the environment."[270]

She preferred light rail transit to a bus-based option.[271] In both 2009[272] and 2011,[273] she would vote for trains both times. But she was angry that Cambridge wasn't included in the first phase.[274] Both years, she would vote against the two-stage approach that would leave Cambridge behind.

"Claudette was a very close friend of mine," regional councillor Jim Wideman told me. Wideman had chaired the committee that was dealing with LRT. "She was sold on LRT," he said. "I mean, she was environmentalist, she loved the LRT. She knew it was absolutely right. But she simply said, 'Jim, I cannot move forward because it isn't Cambridge first.' And it was as simple as that."[275]

Millar showed a sense of outrage about how the project was being implemented. "This is the first time in 40 years as an elected representative of Cambridge and the former town of Preston that I feel obligated to write a letter to the editor," she wrote in July of 2010, when the

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[269] Lianne Elliott, "Cambridge Traffic Problem Ties up Debate," *Kitchener-Waterloo Record*, November 5, 2003, Final edition, sec. Local.

[270] "Claudette Millar Seeks Another Term on Council."

[271] Outhit, "Big Guns Running for Regional Council; 4 Challengers Have Tough Fight against Brewer and Millar, Both Former Mayors."

[272] Barrick, "Region Approves Rail Plan; Council Votes 15-1 in Favour of Bringing Electric Trains to Region"; Region of Waterloo, "Regional Council Minutes: Wednesday, June 24, 2009."

[273] Region of Waterloo, "Regional Council Minutes: Wednesday, June 15, 2011," June 15, 2011.

[274] Outhit, "Big Guns Running for Regional Council; 4 Challengers Have Tough Fight against Brewer and Millar, Both Former Mayors"; Outhit, "Cambridge Transit Gets Short Shrift, Mayor Says."

[275] Jim Wideman, interview by author, Kitchener, ON, April 7, 2016.

provincial funding announcement came out.[276] She believed in the effect of trains, and she knew just what Cambridge would be missing:

> the introduction of light rail improves the environment, health, economy and travel movement within the cities. At the same time buses do not produce the same improvements. Cambridge cannot expect the same quality of life or development opportunities as those enjoyed by Kitchener and Waterloo until some time after 2030 or 2036 as planned by the region. One might ask what the advantage is of being a member city within the Region of Waterloo.[277]

This, she went on, was "an injustice to the people of Cambridge," and it was rooted in the long-standing mistreatment of the city in the region. "Neither the province nor the region see Cambridge as anything more than an appendage to the south of them," she wrote. "We are not recognized as the vibrant city we are, the economical and industrial engine of the region."[278]

Her anger bubbled out around the regional council horseshoe on occasion, as well, most notably when Councillor Mitchell decried the "Cinderella syndrome" she saw in Cambridge. "I am not Cinderella," Millar retorted.[279] Later, she would vote against awarding the contract to build Stage 1, and she would support Craig's motion to exclude Cambridge from paying.[280]

Thus LRT exacerbated Millar's frustration with the Region. But she was respected by her colleagues. Citing Millar as a friend upon her death, Ken Seiling described her as "feisty and opinionated, but she never carried it beyond that."[281]

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[276] Claudette Millar, "Cambridge Deserves Its Fair Share," *Waterloo Region Record*, July 8, 2010, Final edition, sec. Editorial.

[277] Ibid.

[278] Ibid.

[279] Outhit, "Regional Politicians Sniping over Transit Plan."

[280] Region of Waterloo, "Regional Council Minutes: Wednesday, March 19, 2014."

[281] "Officials Reflect on the Life of Cambridge's First Mayor, Claudette Millar."

As much as Millar's road with the Region was rough, she could acknowledge its benefits. Even in her early days as mayor, Millar was supportive of a regional role in planning coordination.[282] On the 40th anniversary of the Region, she acknowledged that services like waste collection, water, and sewer would not have been possible without the Region.[283] And she could separate the monetary benefits of regional government from the disrespect she felt the system had for her city. "Cambridge has always felt that, not monetarily, but in terms of influence and respect, it has not received it from the region," she once said.[284]

Perhaps it is most accurate to say that her heart was always with the city she helped build. On her retirement from regional council, Millar would identify two moments as standing out, both from her earliest days as Cambridge's mayor: "Getting the city together and dealing with the 1974 Grand River flood," as the Times paraphrased.[285] She was proud of the role she played[286] in getting Toyota to select Cambridge as a site for a plant in 1985, during her days as mayor, when Cambridge had been experiencing 20% unemployment. She bought the first vehicle sold off the line and drove it for years.[287] It now sits in the middle of the Waterloo Region Museum.[288]

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[282] Robert Matas, "Brant Area Plan Provides Food for Thought," *The Globe and Mail*, March 12, 1981, sec. News.

[283] Outhit, "Region Celebrates 40 Years as One Big Family Region Has Low Profile, Big Budget."

[284] Outhit, "Regional Council Race Has Star Power; One Retirement and Increased Interest in Regional Politics Bring out Many Worthy Candidates."

[285] Jackson, "Cambridge 'Badly Treated', Says Outgoing Regional Councillor Claudette Millar."

[286] "The Record's View: Claudette Millar Shaped Cambridge -- and Waterloo Region," *Waterloo Region Record*, February 18, 2016, sec. Opinion.

[287] Dave Pink, "Twenty Years of Toyota; Automaker's Decision to Build in Cambridge Pulled the City Back onto Its Feet; 'At That Time the Unemployment Insurance Office Was in Cambridge Place . . . That Day,

So does Claudette Millar. She was inducted into the Region Hall of Fame in 2015.[289]

Upon her death, the Waterloo Region Record, formerly the Kitchener-Waterloo Record, argued

that the Region owed her a significant debt. "Millar showed that the new city of Cambridge, as

well as the new region, could succeed," the Record wrote. "A fierce advocate for Cambridge, she

could push just as hard for regional interests – and most of the time we think that served the

people in her city very well."[290]

The Persistent Face of Kitchener

Carl Zehr

To get to my interview with former Kitchener mayor Carl Zehr on a frosty day in

December, I walk through Carl Zehr Square. The spacious public space in front of Kitchener

City Hall, which hosts café tables in the summer and a large skating rink on winter days like this

one, was known as the Civic Square until just last year. The City of Kitchener announced that it

would be renamed in Zehr's honour with just weeks left in his final term of office.[291]

Zehr and I meet in a quiet corner downstairs at Kitchener's City Hall building.[292] Though

Zehr retired as mayor a full year ago, it seems entirely natural to see him here. He was the face of

When I Walked in the Building, the Men in Line Stood up and Cheered.,'" *Kitchener-Waterloo Record*, December

10, 2005, Final edition, sec. Front.

[288] "Toyota Corolla," *Waterloo Region Museum*, accessed November 18, 2016,

http://www.waterlooregionmuseum.com/exhibits/main-gallery-exhibit/toyota-corolla/.

[289] "Region Hall of Fame: 2015 Inductees."

[290] "The Record's View."

[291] "Square Named in Mayor Zehr's Honour," *City of Kitchener*, November 5, 2014,

http://www.kitchener.ca//en/news/index.aspx?newsId=08711608-a2f5-46c0-90c9-aa37da7ef241.

[292] Carl Zehr, interview by author, Kitchener, ON.

Kitchener for almost two decades. Even before the 2010 to 2014 term started, Zehr was the longest serving mayor of Kitchener.[293] Now in his early 70s,[294] Zehr served 17 years in the mayor's chair,[295] following nine years as a councillor.[296] He finally decided not to run in the 2014 election.[297]

Zehr was not known for being a flashy politician, unlike the incumbent mayor he defeated to take over the job in 1997, who had developed a reputation for being out of touch for wearing his chains of office and an ermine robe while fulfilling his duties.[298] Zehr, an accountant by trade,[299] was quiet by comparison. Upon his retirement, his colleagues commented on what The Record called his "thoughtful, measured style." Regional Chair Ken Seiling said, "He hasn't been controversial. He hasn't looked for profile … He just beavers away on what he thinks is important."[300]

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[293] Terry Pender, "Carl Zehr Becomes Longest Serving Mayor," *Waterloo Region Record*, December 7, 2009, Final edition, sec. News.

[294] Terry Pender, "Mayor to Focus on Greening City," *Kitchener-Waterloo Record*, November 10, 2006, sec. Local.

[295] "Kitchener Mayor Carl Zehr Won't Seek Re-Election," *Waterloo Region Record*, February 4, 2014, sec. News.

[296] Pender, "Mayor to Focus on Greening City."

[297] "Kitchener Mayor Carl Zehr Won't Seek Re-Election."

[298] Pender, "Carl Zehr Becomes Longest Serving Mayor."

[299] Kevin Crowley, "Cautious Zehr Keeps up Lightning Pace," *Kitchener-Waterloo Record*, November 21, 1998, Final edition, sec. Front.

[300] "Mayor Carl Zehr Says Time Is Right to Step aside," *Waterloo Region Record*, February 4, 2014, sec. News.

One of the biggest things Zehr beavered away on was downtown revitalization. Though various efforts had been undertaken since the 1960s,[301] on Zehr's watch the city created the Economic Development Investment Fund (EDIF), which ran until 2013.[302] The $110 million fund brought university campuses, condo developments, and major employers to what has long been a struggling downtown.[303]

Zehr's efforts have put significant focus on the downtown. But he doesn't live there. And he didn't grow up there. Zehr was initially elected to represent a suburban ward, where he lived.[304] And despite being the face of the largest city in the Region, Zehr has rural roots. He grew up in Baden, in what is now Wilmot Township. From a Mennonite family, he went to a Mennonite high school in Kitchener.[305] "So I was in the city but not from the city," he tells me. He got a job in Kitchener when he was 20, and has lived here basically ever since.[306]

Downtown revitalization, for Zehr, is part of a broader strategy for smart growth. "The province's Places to Grow Act was, 40% of development needed to be in the built up area. And when you really take a look at what they meant by built up area, it was everything that existed at that time," he tells me. "So there was lots of room for interpretation," he says. "We were

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[301] See Kevin Curtis, "Revitalizing Kitchener's CBD: Public Planning Initiatives and Effects," in *The Dynamics of the Dispersed City: Geographic and Planning Perspectives on Waterloo Region*, ed. Trudi E. Bunting, Kevin Curtis, and Pierre Filion, Department of Geography Publication Series ; No. 47 (Waterloo, Ont: Dept. of Geography, University of Waterloo, 1996), 137–66.

[302] "Economic Development Investment Fund (EDIF)," *City of Kitchener*, accessed December 15, 2016, http://www.kitchener.ca/en/businessinkitchener/EconomicDevelopmentInvestmentFundEDIF.asp.

[303] Ibid.; "Mayor Carl Zehr Says Time Is Right to Step aside."

[304] Pender, "Mayor to Focus on Greening City"; Pender, "Carl Zehr Becomes Longest Serving Mayor."

[305] Pender, "Carl Zehr Becomes Longest Serving Mayor."

[306] Carl Zehr, interview by author, Kitchener, ON.

focusing on trying to get as much of that intensified development within the core for obvious reasons, be it transit, infrastructure in general, and utilizing the facilities that are there."[307]

Zehr tells me that the City of Kitchener realized years ago that the prime industrial sites of the future would not lie within its borders. It recommended that they be on the East Side Lands, as was eventually enshrined in the Regional Growth Management Strategy, even though the City would not benefit from the assessment directly. The move surprised the other cities, Zehr explains, since they have typically been in competition with Kitchener for these kinds of projects and the money they bring to municipalities that host them.[308]

Still, the City of Kitchener was competing with the City of Cambridge for employment and the City of Waterloo for residential development. Zehr says that there was some animosity with Waterloo when some businesses, like Google, chose to relocate to Downtown Kitchener from Waterloo. "I think Kitchener was seen by Waterloo folks in particular over the … decades as being, even though it's largest, the poor boy and the lunch bucket crowd. And Waterloo was the elite," he explains. But, meanwhile, Zehr worked away at the sort of change that fits his reputation for quiet persistence. "We just sort of quietly went about our business and recalibrated," he says, of the city's business attraction efforts.[309]

For Zehr, light rail transit is a big part of growing up instead of out. "LRT … is a growth management issue," he tells me today.[310] But he's been saying it for years.[311] A look at Zehr's

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[307] Ibid.

[308] Ibid.

[309] Ibid.

[310] Ibid.

past comments in the paper show consistent support for the LRT project. He was speaking about building LRT for smart growth as early as 2004.[312] His remarks have consistently pointed to the idea that building LRT now is about building for the future.[313]

During the 2010 election, when provincial funding came in lower than expected, he said he was pleased the money available would at least keep the project possible.[314] The paper reported, "Zehr supports the original vision for rail transit, but says the reality of a tax increase needed to fund it, means that they need to 'go back to the drawing board.'"[315] He stuck with the project through the 2010 election, telling the Tri-Cities Transport Action Group (TriTAG), "I have been and continue to be a supporter of the LRT proposals. We have one chance to get a new transportation system in place and we need to do it right and now."[316]

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[311] Paige Desmond, "Council Wary of Transit Corridor Incentives," *Waterloo Region Record*, December 7, 2012, First edition, sec. Local; Carl Zehr, "2008 State of the City Address," February 29, 2008, http://app.kitchener.ca/pdf/2008_state_city_address.pdf.

[312] Terry Pender, "'Last-Chance' Growth Plan Puts Transit Back on Rails," *Kitchener-Waterloo Record*, July 21, 2004, Final edition, sec. Front.

[313] Terry Pender, "'Write an Old-Fashioned Letter'; Kitchener Mayor Looks for Input from Citizens on Growth," *Kitchener-Waterloo Record*, March 1, 2008, Final edition, sec. Local; Jeff Outhit, "Region's $790M Rapid-Transit Proposal," *Waterloo Region Record*, May 9, 2009, Final edition, sec. Front; Barrick, "Region Approves Rail Plan; Council Votes 15-1 in Favour of Bringing Electric Trains to Region"; Outhit, "Mixed Views on Transit Poll."

[314] Caldwell, "Rapid Transit Cash Falls Short $300M Commitment Far Less than Ontario Pledged in 2007."

[315] Melinda Dalton, "Three Vie in Kitchener for Mayor," *Waterloo Region Record*, October 22, 2010, Final edition, sec. News.

[316] "TriTAG Candidate Questionnaire 2010," *Tri-Cities Transport Action Group (TriTAG)*, 2010, http://tritag.ca/election2010/winners.php.

Yet despite the consistent support that comes through in the public record, Zehr tells me he had occasionally wondered about the project himself. "I've been with this thing from day one," he tells me. "And I will never say that I didn't question that decision from time to time. Is it the right thing? But every time I questioned it, I would come back to, well, what's the alternative? And the alternative, in 20, 30, 50 years, is much worse. Therefore you've got to go with it. Damn the torpedoes, full speed ahead," he says.[317]

He recalls the moment when he decided, once and for all.[318] He was at the Rally for Rails, held close to the inauguration of the 2010 to 2014 regional council.[319] "I didn't go with a script," he says. "But you get caught up in the moment and … I said to myself, no. I've got to make a definitive statement," he tells me. It attracted some media attention. As the paper reported, "'A number of people have said the politicians need to be listening,' Zehr said. 'I know that I'm listening, and we will have LRT in this community,' he told the crowd."[320] The moment was important to him, too. "That actually galvanized it for me."[321]

Dealing with Kitchener Council was more difficult. His local council voted to hold its own public input meeting on LRT, despite the fact that it was out of the city's jurisdiction, and to ask the Region to hold a referendum on LRT. Zehr opposed both.[322]

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[317] Carl Zehr, interview by author, Kitchener, ON.

[318] Ibid.

[319] Tait, "Hundreds Rally for Light-Rail Transit; Issue Gets Boost in Waterloo ahead of Council Meeting."

[320] Ibid.

[321] Carl Zehr, interview by author, Kitchener, ON.

[322] Pender, "Kitchener Seeks Transit Input; Councillors Vote to Hear Residents on Region's LRT Plans"; D'Amato, "Will There Be a Referendum?"

Zehr tells me he's not sure LRT would have been approved if the councils hadn't been separated. "Had there still been … double representation, I'm not sure that LRT would have gotten approved like it did. Because there would have been so much, 'Well, I've got to go back and check with my council,'" he says. He also thinks there would have been pressure on the regional councillors to follow the direction of their respective local councils on the issue. As the only member of Kitchener Council on regional council, it happened to him. "I would say – I publicly stated – 'I welcome your input. But … I'm bound at the regional level to make that decision based on the regional context. Not on the City of Kitchener's alone. I'll certainly take that into consideration and try to protect Kitchener. But that's not why I'm at the regional council,'" he recalls. "That wasn't liked by some people."[323]

Despite the equivocation from his council, Zehr defended the LRT project, voting for it both in 2009 and 2011.[324] And he continued to defend it after he had announced he wouldn't be running again. He told the Record that those who were trying to get elected by promising to cancel LRT were doing "a disservice to the community,"[325] and wrote a letter to the editor saying the same thing.[326]

Zehr's interest in the OMB appeal, too, persisted after his time as mayor wound down. He supported the decision to appeal the OMB ruling. "What the OMB had done … in total acreage, it was unreasonable," he says. The eventual procedural fairness complaint, and the

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[323] Carl Zehr, interview by author, Kitchener, ON.

[324] Region of Waterloo, "Regional Council Minutes: Wednesday, June 24, 2009"; Region of Waterloo, "Regional Council Minutes: Wednesday, June 15, 2011," June 15, 2011.

[325] "Mayor Carl Zehr Says Time Is Right to Step aside."

[326] Carl Zehr, "Negative Tone of Election Campaign Is Disturbing," *Waterloo Region Record*, October 22, 2014, First edition, sec. Editorial.

revelation that OMB members had been trained in private by witnesses for the developers on land budgeting techniques, further convinced him that the ruling needed to be fought. "Local government … for a long time would have been denied the opportunity to have control of its own fate. It was in the hands of developers. It was much too one sided. And that could not be allowed, in my mind," he says.[327]

Zehr suggests that council's commitment to the appeal grew over time. "Probably the longer it went on, the more intransigent the position became," he says. "'They're going to push us back on that? That's being more unreasonable, so let's really push back now.' That kind of approach," he says. "It wasn't going to happen strictly through the courts. It had to be a negotiated … head to head."[328]

He was generally pleased with the settlement. "While I had certainly on record supported … what the region had put through … I wasn't worried if it went something beyond that," he says, of the land designated for urban expansion. "It was a rather hard position, to go in. But when you're in legal negotiations, you sometimes have to take a hard position in order to not open the barn door," he explains. "I think what the developers were asking for originally was totally out of the question at this point in time."

Being pushed by developers, Zehr tells me, was his earliest introduction to growth management. He wasn't even in office yet as a city councillor when he started to get lobbied. "I think it was between the election in November and [taking office in] December that I was approached by a developer," he says. "What you get, right off the bat, is someone who has a very strong, vested interest." While the perspective the developers pushed was "one-sided," he tells

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[327] Carl Zehr, interview by author, Kitchener, ON.

[328] Ibid.

me he took steps to learn about the big picture on development issues when he started as a councillor.[329]

Zehr says his election opponents over the years would sometimes criticize him for taking donations from developers. "I said, 'Well, I can never be bought for $100 or 750,' whatever the maximum happened to be at the time," he explains. He thinks developers donated to his campaigns because he was generally in favour of growth, rather than the other way around. "My bias was a growth kind of bias," he says. "They may have decided to support me because of that, as opposed to vice versa," he reflects. "And I don't necessarily see anything wrong with that."[330]

But Zehr does have a problem with a few overly cozy relationships he's seen over the years between some of the city councillors and developers in their wards. "It wasn't a healthy environment," he tells me. "You have to be very careful."[331]

Despite his commitment to pushing back against developers on the Regional Official Plan, he doesn't wholeheartedly embrace all its features. While he supports intensification and stopping sprawl, he doesn't necessarily think sprawl should be defined by the Countryside Line. The Countryside Line didn't follow the municipal boundaries. "Urban sprawl is not necessarily jumping across a Countryside Line. Why do you have a city? Well, that's where you're going to have the growth," he tells me. Zehr would prefer that development be contained by the municipal boundary itself, in most cases. "People got up in arms, I think, because of fear of jumping across that line. When in fact we're well … inside the city," he says. The Countryside Line isn't

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[329] Ibid.

[330] Ibid.

[331] Ibid.

permanent. "The Countryside Line can't be something that is there in perpetuity. Because circumstances change. Technology changes."[332]

As for permanent protections, Zehr pushed unsuccessfully for the Region to delay the Protected Countryside and Regional Recharge Area designations in southwest Kitchener for five years.[333] He tells me that Kitchener's southwest, during the Regional Official Plan process, was an area of disagreement between the City of Kitchener and the Region. The initial reaction at the City to the Region's proposal for the area, he recalls, was, "'What do you mean you're blocking out that section as the Region?'" Still, the two governments worked through it. "It was through negotiations, through discussion, there was a clear understanding. And there were some adjustments made during that period." I ask him why he thinks the City and the Region had different views on what should happen in the area in the first place. "The local governments are the ones who have to deal with the builders [and] developers, on a very micro level," he says. But he also thinks some of it was about the City losing that assessment. "If you don't sort of put your stake in the ground, at the initial stage, you're not going to get anything bigger. So, therefore, compared to municipality X or Y … we have to make sure that we're getting as much as we can." But the disagreement wasn't as much as it might have seemed, he tells me. "It had to be grounded in some basis of good planning principles. And so we weren't as far off in reality as was, as were some of the shots that we fired back and forth, and part of negotiation."[334]

It's an example of the tensions he sees within the two-tier system. "There's a good side and a bad side to the fact that we have … two local levels of government," he says. "By pushing

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[332] Ibid.

[333] Region of Waterloo, "Regional Council Minutes: Wednesday, June 30, 2010."

[334] Carl Zehr, interview by author, Kitchener, ON.

both ways, you hopefully come up with a better solution," he tells me. "It's positive to have that kind of dialogue. But you probably would have had the internal dialogue if it was one [government]. Because you had responsibility for both of those avenues."[335]

While some have argued during amalgamation debates that regional government protects the townships from urban expansion, Zehr doesn't see it that way. "There are 16 people on [regional] council," he says, "four of whom represent the townships." That means rural protections are up to the urban councillors. "That argument, in terms of whether they're going to be lost in the shuffle, goes out the window. Because it was the majority of us, the city folks, who were saying we need to have a Countryside Line."[336]

In his urban municipality, developing a commitment to smart growth was part of a broader culture shift at the City of Kitchener. "There were some naysayers … in both of those categories, council and staff," he says. He tells me they say culture shifts take about seven years. "With hindsight now, it did take about that amount of time to get people really thinking that that was the norm that you talked about, as opposed to something that was just a theoretical scientific approach."[337]

Zehr tells me he thinks the Region had to shift its culture, too, but had an easier time of it. "The Region would not have to deal with applications specifically for development," he tells me. There are few neighbourhood complaints to deal with. "Therein lies one of the problems of two tier government."[338]

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[335] Ibid.

[336] Ibid.

[337] Ibid.

[338] Ibid.

Zehr has long been a supporter of amalgamation, and of a single-tier city. He was beavering away during the Harris years, too. He had participated in the Sweeney Review,[339] which had recommended a single-tier government,[340] while he was off of council for a term. Zehr tells me that the area was originally scheduled by the province to be amalgamated on the first day of 2000, as were a number of other communities. It didn't happen because the Progressive Conservatives were concerned about losing seats here, particularly in Cambridge. Zehr had begged cabinet minister and Waterloo North MPP Elizabeth Witmer to keep pushing for a single-tier amalgamation. "I remember going to Liz Witmer at the time, in her office, and saying … 'You alone have the capacity to make this happen. It's the right thing to do,'" he tells me. "And she'll probably deny this. But she said, 'You're right. But it's not going to happen.'" With a forced single-tier amalgamation off the table, changes to satisfy the province were left up to the local municipalities. "That then began the dialogue about, what can we do within the region to placate the province."[341]

Zehr signed on to the plan the mayors put together for a revised two-tier system, which had proposed that the Region take over sewer and water, as well.[342] But in the end, he voted with the other Kitchener councillors, along with one from Woolwich and one from Waterloo, and killed the final deal.[343] Zehr said at the time that a two-tier solution was, as the Record

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[339] Ibid.

[340] Sweeney, "Governance," 23.

[341] Carl Zehr, interview by author, Kitchener, ON.

[342] Brewer et al., "Regional Reform in Waterloo Region."

[343] Rubinoff, "Region Reform Falls Apart; Councillors Agree to Defer All Talks until after November Elections."

paraphrased, "delaying the inevitable." Amalgamation opponent Mayor Craig accused them of wanting the two-tier process to fail so that the province would force a single-tier system.[344]

But Zehr tells a much more nuanced story. "If you take water and sewer out of the local municipality, and put it over to the Region, those same folks that are doing water and sewer are also doing our gas distribution," he says. Joint staffing efficiencies would be lost, putting a strain on municipal budgets. "I said, so to put it bluntly, it was, no. You take water and sewer, you take the whole thing. In other words, amalgamation," he says. "You can't just keep picking off the gravy …. Then you make the local municipalities inefficient," he explains. And if he had wanted to sabotage two-tier government, agreeing to the deal would have been the way to do it. "The Machiavellian approach to it would be, yeah, let's do that. So that eventually it'll have to be. But in the meantime you would have local municipalities who are limping along, from a taxation and assessment standpoint."[345]

Zehr's support for a single-tier system isn't about money. "I never banked on the dollars, that there'd be savings," he says, though he thinks the change could prevent future tax avoidance. He recalls seeing opinion polling over the years that showed significant support for at least some amalgamation, including from Waterloo residents.[346]

He thinks a single-tier system is the right option for the future. "We are already one community. But we have separate governments. And yes, there's some duplication. And yes, it would be a hell of a struggle to put them together. And there would be some winners and some losers. But 10, 20 years down the road, I think that … would be … far better, in terms of our

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[344] Ibid.

[345] Carl Zehr, interview by author, Kitchener, ON.

[346] Ibid.

voice being heard." When the region is dealing with other communities, he tells me, the different municipalities need to speak together. He cites a recent speech by Toronto mayor John Tory, about the Waterloo to Toronto tech corridor. "Collectively, we have to raise our game in order to not lose our voice when Toronto starts sharing things with us," he says. "We still need to be speaking with one voice."[347]

Still, Zehr thinks that two-tier government here has worked. "I think it works better than it does in some other areas. And I say that because, in spite of our differences, we're successful. Why?" he asks. He cites what he calls "a culture of collaboration." In the context of this region, he tells me he knows someone who coined the term "coopetition" to describe the state of affairs, both in regional government and in the remarkably collaborative tech sector.[348]

Zehr tried to resurrect the amalgamation question about 10 years ago, with little interest from the other municipalities.[349] But he thinks the future of the two-tier system isn't settled. He tells me what Chair Seiling once told him. "His comment is, 'We didn't make it work around …1999, 2000. It's dead now for another 10 years,'" Zehr recalls. "Well, in 2010 we tried a referendum for [merging] Kitchener and Waterloo. So it's probably dead for another 10 years," he says. "We're halfway through that 10 years."[350]

To some extent, Zehr demurs when I ask him about future possibilities for amalgamation. "First of all, I'm not in a position to do anything about it," he says. But he tells me of a

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[347] Ibid.

[348] Ibid.

[349] Carl Zehr, "Reform Can Make Region Better," *Kitchener-Waterloo Record*, October 25, 2005, Final edition, sec. Insight; Christian Aagaard, "Mayors Cool to Reform Request," *Kitchener-Waterloo Record*, October 26, 2005, Final edition, sec. Local.

[350] Carl Zehr, interview by author, Kitchener, ON.

community group meeting he attended a few weeks ago. A change that he thought would be of community benefit didn't get a warm reception from folks at the three cities.

"If we were speaking with one voice, this would be a no brainer," he tells me.[351] Perhaps, five years from now, Carl Zehr might be beavering away behind the scenes once again.

You Can Fight City Hall

Brenda Halloran

I meet former Waterloo mayor Brenda Halloran in her Waterloo Innovation Network office on a dreary December day.[352] Halloran recently turned 60,[353] and she didn't run again in the last election.[354] Her current employer is Michael Wekerle, of CBC's Dragon's Den.[355] He has grand plans for this office complex, which contains a few of the 21 former Blackberry buildings scattered across Waterloo.[356] Across the parking lot, we can see the construction on the nearby spur line, as workers lay the tracks for the coming light rail transit system. The R&T Park station will be a short walk from here.

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[351] Ibid.

[352] Brenda Halloran, interview by author, Waterloo, ON, December 14, 2015.

[353] "Brenda Halloran: Mayor of Waterloo 2006-2014," *City of Waterloo*, accessed December 20, 2016, http://www.waterloo.ca/en/government/BrendaHalloran.asp.

[354] Paige Desmond, "Halloran Won't Seek Third Term; Waterloo Mayor Says Decision Not to Run 'Gut-Wrenching,'" *Waterloo Region Record*, December 19, 2013, First edition, sec. NEWS.

[355] James Jackson, "Halloran Lands CEO Position," *Waterloo Chronicle*, January 20, 2015, http://www.waterloochronicle.ca/news-story/5894515-halloran-lands-ceo-position/.

[356] Terry Pender, "Former BlackBerry Buildings Filling up," *Waterloo Region Record*, December 12, 2015, http://www.therecord.com/news-story/6180774-former-blackberry-buildings-filling-up/.

Yet the LRT project looms much larger in our conversation than it does in the window. Halloran had voted for the project in 2009.[357] She was the only regional councillor to change her vote from outright support to outright opposition between 2009 and 2011.[358] The mayor of one of the two cities that would get LRT voted against it. Halloran's change of heart wasn't nearly enough to stop the project. But it was certainly enough to raise eyebrows.[359]

Most will be surprised to discover that it wasn't really about LRT at all.

To understand Brenda Halloran on light rail, we must return to another, much more personal fight over land use. One involving her home, her child, and a neighbourhood fighting sinking homes and spreading cancer.[360]

As a single mother living on Ralgreen Crescent in Kitchener in the 1990s, Halloran was at the centre of a protracted battle with the City of Kitchener over her home and the others in her neighbourhood.[361] "I found out … that my house was built on a contaminated landfill site," she

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[357] Region of Waterloo, "Regional Council Minutes: Wednesday, June 24, 2009," 6–8.

[358] Region of Waterloo, "Regional Council Minutes: Wednesday, June 15, 2011," June 15, 2011.

[359] As Mayor Deutschmann of North Dumfries told me, "If there's anyone that surprised me about their vote, it was her. Because here you have Waterloo, a high tech community, smart community. … An Intelligent Community award winner. You know, the high-tech community saying we need this. … And to vote against it? That really surprised me. That really surprised me." Rob Deutschmann, interview by author, Kitchener, ON, October 2, 2015.

[360] For a concise third-party summary of the Ralgreen Crescent neighbourhood's history, see Qian Wang, "Facilitating Brownfield Redevelopment Projects: Evaluation, Negotiation, and Policy" (University of Waterloo, 2011), 65–66, https://uwspace.uwaterloo.ca/handle/10012/5948.

[361] Tamsin McMahon, "Who Is Brenda Halloran?; From Fighting City Hall to the Mayor's Seat," *Kitchener-Waterloo Record*, November 14, 2006, sec. Front.

tells me.[362] The former wetland had garbage dumped in it by the city in the 1940s and 1950s, and her housing development had been approved in the 1960s.[363] She and her neighbours had no idea until her neighbour's house started sinking. "It was covered up by the Kitchener government," she tells me. "City Hall, at that time."[364]

People were sick, but the residents couldn't show it was connected to the landfill site, she tells me. "We lost a little boy, and my next door neighbor, to acute lymphomatic leukemia, which is caused by all this – but you couldn't prove it," she tells me. "The system was constantly saying to us, 'Can't prove it. Can't prove it. Who are you?' They fought us for years."[365]

In 1997, Halloran was the president of the Ralgreen residents' association that sued the City of Kitchener over the mess.[366] Her daughter was sick, and she eventually decided she had to move in with her parents. "My house stunk like chemicals. The foundation cracked and the water came in the basement. You couldn't walk in the house. Your eyes were burning. It was mind-boggling."[367] She stopped paying her mortgage in 1999 when she started renting a townhouse.[368]

Eventually, the City agreed to buy 27 townhomes and demolished them. But Halloran's home wasn't included. The bank seized the house and sold it at a loss.[369] "I lost everything I

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[362] Brenda Halloran, interview by author, Waterloo, ON.

[363] Bob Burtt, "Ralgreen Group Sues for $65M," *Kitchener-Waterloo Record*, December 23, 1997, Final edition, sec. Local.

[364] Brenda Halloran, interview by author, Waterloo, ON.

[365] Ibid.

[366] Burtt, "Ralgreen Group Sues for $65M."

[367] Brenda Halloran, interview by author, Waterloo, ON.

[368] Bob Burtt, "Excluded from Ralgreen Deal, Woman Files Suit," *Kitchener-Waterloo Record*, January 28, 2002, Final edition, sec. Local.

[369] Ibid.

owned," she tells me.[370] The bank sued her for the rest, and she sued both the bank and the

Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation back.[371]

The battle dragged on for years. "I was in litigation with CMHC, the TD bank, and the

City of Kitchener when I became the mayor," she tells me.[372]

Ralgreen is Halloran's political origin story. In many ways, it defines how she sees her

role in politics. Halloran brings up Ralgreen while we're talking about her stance against LRT. "I

fought City Hall in Kitchener for Ralgreen," she says. "So I've always kind of felt very strongly

about things and stayed to them."[373] She watched as she and her neighbours were ignored. Back

in the 1990s, she told the paper, "We've been kicking and screaming but no one would help us. It

should never have come to this."[374] The story she recounts for me today shows the same

frustration, and the extent to which she felt she and her neighbours were manipulated and

ignored by city officials and their experts:

> we as a group came together … it was 42 families. And they were mainly blue collar
> people. And we had to be highly organized. And we would go to meetings with the
> City of Kitchener, and they would refuse to allow us to bring in a lawyer or any of
> our specialists. To intimidate us. So I'd be in there with my neighbors, all their
> power houses all staring at us, and there's me and like 10 of us sitting there. And
> they were just determined to destroy us. It was fascinating. It was really something.
> And I would coach all of my little team saying, we can't swear, we can't yell, we
> have to be professional the whole time. And – because people, this is their lives, their
> houses. Their livelihood. Sick kids, you know. And they just wanted to swear and
> scream and bring in the pitchforks and the burning torches. But we would sit there,
> and I was never more proud of people in my life, because the women would all be
> dressed nicely, and we all had clipboards, and we'd sit there, and nobody knew what

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[370] Brenda Halloran, interview by author, Waterloo, ON.

[371] Burtt, "Excluded from Ralgreen Deal, Woman Files Suit."

[372] Brenda Halloran, interview by author, Waterloo, ON.

[373] Ibid.

[374] Burtt, "Ralgreen Group Sues for $65M."

we were talking about half the time. I would sit there and think, I have no idea what they're talking about.[375]

It was frustration at her treatment that drove her into politics. "It was really quite an experience of how government should not treat people. And so I was really determined to make a change," she says. "So I ran."[376]

When Halloran ran, she did so in the city of Waterloo, where she'd lived since she moved to the area as a child from Hamilton. Not in Kitchener. "You know, I lived in Kitchener for two and a half years of my life," she says, of her time on Ralgreen Crescent. "I was always a Waterlooian."[377] In the election, she took on a sitting mayor and a former mayor,[378] both seen as strong contenders. She defeated Mayor Herb Epp and former mayor Brian Turnbull in what the paper described as "a stunning upset."[379] She won 50.5% of the vote in a three-way race. Her campaign cost $12,000, to the incumbent's $70,000.[380] "None of us knew what we're doing," she recounts. "It was just timing for me. People were ready for a change."[381]

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[375] Brenda Halloran, interview by author, Waterloo, ON.

[376] Ibid.

[377] Ibid.

[378] Philip Jalsevac, "Third Person Runs for Waterloo Mayor," *Kitchener-Waterloo Record*, June 1, 2006, Final edition, sec. Local.

[379] Philip Jalsevac, "Rookie Defeats Old Guard; Victory over Epp, Turnbull Puts New Face in Mayor's Office," *Kitchener-Waterloo Record*, November 14, 2006, sec. Front.

[380] Terry Pender, "Municipal Candidates Disclose Campaign Costs; Records Reveal Big Bucks Don't Always Net a Win," *Kitchener-Waterloo Record*, April 4, 2007, sec. Front.

[381] Brenda Halloran, interview by author, Waterloo, ON.

Of course, Halloran's election meant that the councillors she had battled over Ralgreen at the City of Kitchener were now her colleagues. Carl Zehr,[382] Tom Galloway,[383] and Jean Haalboom[384] had all served on Kitchener Council in the late 1990s.[385] Geoff Lorentz joined them around the regional council table for Halloran's second term.[386] He had served as the ward councillor for the Ralgreen area.[387] The disputes from the 1990s between Halloran and Lorentz were public and at times personal, with reports in the daily paper that Halloran said Lorentz did not believe there was a problem and that he "has backstabbed and sabotaged us."[388][389]

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[382] Bob Burtt, "Ralgreen Group Boycotts Council: Ill Feelings and an Impasse in Relations with Coun. Geoff Lorentz Cited for the Action," *Kitchener-Waterloo Record*, December 11, 1997, Final edition, sec. Local.

[383] "Tom Galloway, 59," *Waterloo Region Record*, October 15, 2010, Final edition, sec. News.

[384] "18 Kitchener Candidates Seek Four Regional Council Seats," *Kitchener-Waterloo Record*, November 10, 2000, Final edition, sec. Local.

[385] Halloran wrote a letter to the Waterloo Region Record in 1999 asking people to contact Mayor Zehr and "urging him to live up to his promise to Ralgreen families and getting this disgraceful situation resolved now." Brenda Halloran, "Ralgreen Still Suffers," *Kitchener-Waterloo Record*, April 9, 1999, Final edition, sec. Opinion.

[386] Brian Caldwell, "Night of the Incumbents Top Four Municipal Leaders All Returning for Another Term," *Waterloo Region Record*, October 26, 2010, Final edition, sec. News.

[387] Burtt, "Ralgreen Group Boycotts Council."

[388] Ibid.

[389] Lorentz recalls the situation on Ralgreen differently. He told me, in the end, there were no toxic chemicals, but rather peat moss. "The peat moss, when it got wet it expanded, and started the rot. And when it dried out, things kind of shrunk. When that whole area was built, it was built with a methane gas venting system. And over the years, the residents – it wasn't passed on, and the residents were blocking up the pipes, they were cutting them off. They had no idea what it was. It was methane, from the rotting peat." As he described his efforts to assist Halloran, "I used to go over and talk to her at night. And we'd figure out what our game plan was, and the next day – and then I'd read about something completely different in the paper. So I stopped doing that." But he was

I'm curious about the same thing a local journalist asked shortly after Halloran's election: how would her past conflicts with her now colleagues affect how she would do her job? "It's not a personal issue," she said in 2006, upon her initial election, noting that they had "business to do," and that she was "looking forward to having a really good relationship with them."[390]

Now that her eight years on regional council are over, she basically tells me the same thing.[391] "It was what they had to do and we had to do," she says, "so I never took it as a personal thing against me." Without naming names, she says many of the people on the other side had come to her to apologize. "Quite a few of them apologized to me and said that … the biggest regret they ever had was fighting us."[392]

But even if Halloran's negative experiences with the City of Kitchener and its council didn't affect her working relationships at the Region, it affected her views on LRT. Her description of the LRT issue parallels her description of Ralgreen: invoking experts to ignore the people.

Halloran tells me today that she had "a lot of misgivings," even during the first vote, "about the cost, about the route, about the technology, about what our needs are now."[393] She worries that building LRT will prevent the Region from embracing changes in transportation

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sympathetic to her situation. "She was really concerned. She was the single mom then. She was frightened. I mean really, nobody knew – none of us knew what was going on." Geoff Lorentz, interview by author, Kitchener, ON.

[390] McMahon, "Who Is Brenda Halloran?"

[391] On this point, Halloran and Lorentz agree that their past interactions didn't matter to their relations on regional council. Geoff Lorentz, interview by author, Kitchener, ON.

[392] Brenda Halloran, interview by author, Waterloo, ON.

[393] Ibid.

technology;[394] she had been the only councillor in 2007 to vote to further study "aerobus" technology for rapid transit, which would hang vehicles off suspended cables in the air, and which had never been used as an urban transit system.[395] "What if in five years something else magnificent comes along and we can't embrace it because we've signed up for 30 years?" she asks me. "You never sign up for 30 years for anything."[396]

But despite those misgivings, she voted for the project in 2009, relying on the recommendations of staff. "I voted for it, and I thought, well, okay, I'm not an urban planner, it's been studied for years. You know, all this work's been done. I have to trust what's been presented…. I'm the new kid on the block."[397]

She was genuinely shocked by the anger she heard when knocking on doors in 2010. "I'd say, you know, 'I'm running for re-election, and how's everything going?' 'Oh yeah, great,'" she recounts. "'Is there anything you're upset …' 'That damn LRT.' It was at every single house. Over and over and over." Halloran thinks that her colleagues had the exact same experience that she did. "It wasn't just me hearing it," she says. "So every single person who was campaigning in the 2010 election heard the same thing at the door. Massive anger and resistance."[398] During the election itself, she made it clear she thought the issue was about listening. "As we are

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[394] Ibid.

[395] Jeff Outhit, "Buses, Trains Top Transit Picks; Region Rules out Driverless Taxis, Flying Buses, as List Is Narrowed," *Kitchener-Waterloo Record*, February 21, 2007, sec. Local.

[396] Brenda Halloran, interview by author, Waterloo, ON.

[397] Ibid.

[398] Ibid.

canvassing we are hearing loud and clear and we are listening," she said during one of the mayoral debates.[399]

When I ask her today, she still sees opposition from the people. Her comments at the time generally highlighted that she felt the public was overwhelmingly against the project.[400] "Right off the bat, we heard door after door after door, our citizens' complete opposition to the light rail transit system," she said the night of the vote.[401] Yet at the time, Halloran also acknowledged that she was receiving pressure from those who supported the project, too, whom she described as "the LRT guys" who were sending her "hate mail."[402] If Halloran was hearing from supporters of the project, as well, like her colleagues, then why did she consistently say so unequivocally that she believed the public was opposed?

Halloran focuses on the people she calls "Ma and Pa Waterloo," whom she's talked about throughout her tenure as mayor.[403] Their voices were those she heard while knocking on doors. She tells me today that she felt that this wasn't coming through during the 2011 review of the project: "You saw how staff kept bringing back again, the same things, the same things. So I was

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[399] Terry Pender, "Waterloo Mayoral Hopefuls Face off Questions Focus on Fluoridation, Transit, Hydro, Merger Talks," *Waterloo Region Record*, October 13, 2010, Final edition, sec. News.

[400] Barrick, "Councillors Still Trying to Gauge If There's Support for Light Rail Transit"; Outhit, "Transit Referendum Pitched; Two Regional Councillors Push for Public Vote on Rapid Transit."

[401] Outhit, "Rail Plan Passes; Regional Council Votes 9-2 in Support of 'Transformational' Rapid Transit."

[402] Terry Pender, "Light-Rail Transit Supporters Plan Rally; Concern Expressed about Flagging Municipal Support," *Waterloo Region Record*, December 2, 2010, First edition, sec. Local.

[403] Pender, "Light Rail Hinges on 3 Votes; Crucial Light-Rail Vote at Regional Council Hangs on the Decisions of Three Township Mayors"; Paige Desmond, "Halloran 'Honoured' to Have Served as Mayor," *Waterloo Region Record*, November 27, 2014, First edition, sec. News.

thinking, well, wait a minute. Where's the will of the people?"[404] It's the same thing she was

saying in 2011.[405]

     Halloran makes a distinction between the views of Ma and Pa Waterloo, who were

opposed to the project, and those who were pushing her to support LRT. "I was getting a lot of

criticism, but you know what? I was getting criticism from up here," she explains, holding her

hand up, "but from behind here, Ma and Pa Waterloo was a massive force behind me saying, yes.

… And I felt very secure knowing that I was representing the citizens who voted me in, and

knowing how the vast majority feel."[406]

     So on LRT, like with Ralgreen, Halloran saw a fight between the people and the

government with their experts. This time, she was in a position to stand with the people, and to

do it from inside City Hall. She pushed for a referendum.[407] When regional council rejected it,[408]

she voted against the project, despite the pressure she hints she was getting from her regional

council colleagues. "It would have been easier for me to be a team player, so that everybody

voted for it," she says. "But I couldn't, because again, I am who I am…. I think people were

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[404] Brenda Halloran, interview by author, Waterloo, ON.

[405] "The citizens are very concerned that they feel we're right back to square one. Nothing's changed, and where's their voice in all of this? They thought they made their voices clear at the election time, to the candidates, that they are opposed." Outhit, "Region to Debate Transit Referendum Request."

[406] Brenda Halloran, interview by author, Waterloo, ON.

[407] Outhit, "Transit Referendum Pitched; Two Regional Councillors Push for Public Vote on Rapid Transit."

[408] Region of Waterloo, "Regional Council Minutes: Wednesday, June 1, 2011."

angry with me because I didn't. I just stayed true to what I believed in…. believe me, it ain't easy being me."[409]

Halloran's belief in the importance of listening to people, and of not simply overruling them from a position of expertise and power, prevailed on LRT. But for it to do so, she didn't have to abandon her beliefs about growth management. Halloran doesn't see LRT as a land use planning tool. "For me, it being an economic development project's totally different from being an effective, efficient rapid transit project," she tells me.[410] In 2012, she skipped a portion of her state of the city address that was supposed to talk about how LRT was spurring intensification in Waterloo's core. When reporters noticed, she told them that, as they paraphrased, "downtown Waterloo is intensifying already."[411] She tells me the same thing today. "A lot of it was already there," she says. And she's not convinced that the rapid transit corridor has room for all the intensification that ridership demands. "It's very, very tight to find the areas where we can put up some 25 story office buildings and things like that that are on the route," she says. "Especially up in Waterloo." So for Halloran, it's not about intensification. It's about transportation. And what she thinks Waterloo Region really needs is better transportation to Toronto.[412]

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[409] Brenda Halloran, interview by author, Waterloo, ON.

[410] Ibid.

[411] Jeff Outhit, "Halloran Opts to Accentuate the Positive; Waterloo Mayor Skips Bad News, Controversial Transit Vote in Annual State-of-the-City Address," *Waterloo Region Record*, March 24, 2012, First edition, sec. Local.

[412] This is consistent with Halloran's comments, as minuted, from the 2009 vote when she supported LRT: "There has been three years of intensive public input and part of the long term transportation plan is to connect to Toronto which is imperative." Region of Waterloo, "Regional Council Minutes: Wednesday, June 24, 2009," 4.

Thus Halloran's beliefs about rural and agricultural protection can coexist with her opposition to LRT. She's an enthusiastic supporter of the Countryside Line and rural and agricultural protections.[413] In fact, one of her main campaign stances during her first election was to oppose recently approved developments on the west side of Waterloo on the moraine, near the Wilmot Line, based on environmental concerns and community opposition.[414] She had told environmentalists during the election that "we must stop the development on the moraine and will do everything I can as mayor ."[415]

But seven months after taking office, she had changed her position, saying she had become "comfortable" with the project.[416] "I had to change my political stance, because I was wrong," she tells me.[417] When she was elected, she learned both that it was too late to stop the process, and that the environmental conditions weren't what she had feared. "I was terrified about what was going to happen," she says, of her views before the election. "What I had heard and learned from campaigning, and being on the outside of the city hall, was different than going

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[413] Jeff Outhit, "Council Protects Rural Lands Thousands of Hectares of Land Protected from Development despite Criticism," *Waterloo Region Record*, June 23, 2010, Final edition, sec. Local; Brenda Halloran, interview by author, Waterloo, ON.

[414] Philip Jalsevac, "Epp Locks Horns with Former Mayor," *Kitchener-Waterloo Record*, October 5, 2006, Final edition, sec. Local; McMahon, "Who Is Brenda Halloran?"; "Brenda Halloran's Learning Curve," *Kitchener-Waterloo Record*, November 15, 2006, sec. Opinion; Jeff Outhit, "Halloran's Political Dream Come True; Waterloo's New Mayor Excited about Job Ahead," *Kitchener-Waterloo Record*, November 15, 2006, sec. Front.

[415] Tamsin McMahon, "Mayor's Development Flip-Flop; On the Campaign Brenda Halloran Said Moraine Construction 'Must Stop.' Now She Says Plan to Build 1,600 Homes Is 'Heading in the Right Direction,'" *Kitchener-Waterloo Record*, July 4, 2007, sec. Front.

[416] Ibid.

[417] Brenda Halloran, interview by author, Waterloo, ON.

in there and reading the planning notes and realizing, oh. This is not what I had understood."

While the media would go after her as a flip-flopper, "my ego had to be pushed aside for the

benefit of the city. And I couldn't be political. I had to do the right thing."[418]

Still, despite her eventual acquiescence to the west side development, Halloran doesn't

like watching developers push governments around any more than she likes watching

governments push citizens around. "As mayor, I was often seeing really strong forces coming

together to try to purchase land right along the borders, and then bully the politicians into

changing zonings," she tells me. "There's a lot of pressure on all of us, all municipalities,

especially in the south end of Kitchener, to open those boundaries." She avoided lunches and

dinners with developers, opting to only meet in the official confines of City Hall to stay away

from favouritism. She doesn't know why some developers think they can pressure governments

into letting them expand in areas not slated for development. "I don't know if it's an arrogance or

maybe just a blind assumption that, because they employ a lot of people, they have different

rights than everybody else," she says.[419]

Ironically, Halloran is now seeing the developer/city relationship from the other side,

with her work on this site. "We want to build two 25-stories of condos here. And [we're] being

told by the city, hmmm, maybe not." She describes a planning environment in which expert staff

can become, in effect, gatekeepers over a city's development. "A lot of stuff doesn't get to

council," she says. "And if I didn't … know the ropes of how to maybe bring in the councillor,

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[418] Ibid.

[419] Ibid.

get the support of the CAO and senior leaders – you think, what have we missed because four or five city planners don't think it's a good idea?"[420]

Yet Halloran speaks highly of planning staff at both the City of Waterloo and the Region.[421] And while she thinks people don't know what the Region does, she also thinks it gives an important contrast to the more parochial politics at the area municipal level. "As much as people complain that we have too many levels of government, the regional government has a very broad sense of governing. In the best interest of the entire land mass. Not about people's own little castles."[422]

Halloran supported the decision to appeal the OMB ruling because of regional staff. "I trusted staff's expertise and knowledge, their long term planning, the amount of work that had gone into it," she tells me. "And I felt that my job was to support staff and to support what had been years and years of work."[423]

Despite her support for the appeal, Halloran had her reservations about the official plan. "I did have my own personal concerns about: I think we are being a bit too restrictive."[424] In the end, her concerns about the Regional Official Plan not providing enough new land for urban expansion were addressed by the settlement. "The resolution that was finalized was actually really well done, and I think that struck the right balance for everybody," she says. "[It] will continue to help us grow and create the subdivisions that people want, and the growth that is still

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[420] Ibid.

[421] Ibid.

[422] Ibid.

[423] Ibid.

[424] Ibid.

being purchased by people. But we still are protecting a lot of our farmland and containing that growth."[425]

Her description of the settlement alludes to her years as a mediator,[426] emphasizing a sense of collaboration and compromise. But on LRT, the biggest issue of her second regional council term, as on Ralgreen, Halloran is proud that she stood firm, and kept her promise to Ma and Pa Waterloo. It's like she told reporters after her last state of the city address as mayor: "I never changed my vote, I maintained my promise to the electorate … For me, it's about integrity."[427]

The View from the Townships

Les Armstrong

It's a crisp autumn day in October. I've booked a CarShare for the drive out to the country from my 20-storey condo building in the city of Waterloo. I drive through the bright sun past the changing leaves, and park next to the Wilmot Township office in Baden. Inside, I meet Mayor Les Armstrong in his office, with a window that looks out at the building's main entrance. "If I'm here and I don't have anybody with me, my door's open," he tells me. His constituents, "They just come in, and they come and talk."[428]

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[425] Ibid.

[426] Jalsevac, "Third Person Runs for Waterloo Mayor."

[427] "Halloran Upbeat about Waterloo's Future in Final State of City Speech," *Waterloo Region Record*, March 21, 2014, sec. News.

[428] Les Armstrong, interview by author, Baden, ON, October 19, 2015.

Armstrong is in his mid-60s,[429] with a white beard and a comfortable smile. He served

five terms[430] as a township councillor since the 1980s,[431] before becoming mayor in his first run

in 2010, when the previous mayor retired.[432] As Wilmot Township's only representative on

regional council, he was thrust headfirst into the LRT debate.

As a mayoral candidate during the height of the LRT controversy, Armstrong wasn't a

fan of LRT. In response to a questionnaire by TriTAG, Armstrong wrote, "We are such a vehicle

oriented society that it will take time to convince people to take public transit of any kind. The

light rail proposal is so expensive that to waste taxpayers money on something that may never

become popular is not wise."[433] Shortly after the election, Armstrong told the daily paper that his

constituents want Grand River Transit service to Wilmot Township, but not, as the paper

paraphrased, "any new programs or projects that will require a lot of new spending."[434]

Yet, along with all of his rural mayor colleagues, Armstrong ended up supporting the

LRT project. I ask him about his change of heart. "Well, during that first election as mayor … I

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[429] "Township Candidates," *Kitchener-Waterloo Record*, November 11, 2006, sec. Local.

[430] Melinda Dalton, "Wilmot to Elect New Mayor as Roth Decides to Retire," *Waterloo Region Record*, February 3, 2010, Final edition, sec. Local.

[431] Anne Kelly, "Wilmot Township Voters Will Get Plenty of Choice," *Kitchener-Waterloo Record*, November 4, 1997, Final edition, sec. Local.

[432] Terry Pender, "Newcomers Elected to Regional Council," *Waterloo Region Record*, October 26, 2010, Final edition, sec. LOCAL; Dalton, "Wilmot to Elect New Mayor as Roth Decides to Retire."

[433] "TriTAG Candidate Questionnaire 2010."

[434] Brent Davis and Greg Mercer, "Change Afoot in the Townships New Mayors in Wilmot, Woolwich, Plenty of New Faces on Councils," *Waterloo Region Record*, October 26, 2010, Final edition, sec. Local.

didn't have much information about the LRT," he says. "When people ask me about it … I said, sounds expensive, but I don't know. Because I haven't been privy to all the information yet."[435]

Like he said the night of the 2011 LRT vote,[436] he tells me that he learned about the project after he was elected. "I was able to look at all the information and understand that [the LRT] is important for two reasons," he explains. "One, it provides that transportation on that spine, which is something I found out that they've been talking about for probably 50 years …. And the other important thing is that the townships don't have to pay."[437]

As a councillor, Armstrong learned about the longevity of the plans and the fact that the project costs wouldn't be borne by Wilmot residents and businesses directly. But he also heard other stories. Armstrong heard about businesses that had come and gone back to Toronto "because they didn't have that transportation infrastructure that was suitable for them."[438] He heard from "a lot of the millennials [who] are really in favour of public transportation. They came and said, we're buying houses close to the downtown, so that I can ride the bus."[439]

Beyond learning more about these urban perspectives on LRT, he saw the connections between the Region's goals and the townships' rural needs. "The whole idea," he says, "was developing of the brownfields. And building up instead of out was important to us. Because, you know, agriculture for Wilmot Township and for Wellesley and Woolwich is a big portion of what we are."[440]

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[435] Les Armstrong, interview by author, Baden, ON.

[436] Outhit, "Rail Plan Passes; Regional Council Votes 9-2 in Support of 'Transformational' Rapid Transit."

[437] Les Armstrong, interview by author, Baden, ON.

[438] Ibid.

[439] Ibid.

[440] Ibid.

Armstrong's commitment to preserving rural ways of life should not be mistaken for anti-growth sentiment. He acknowledges that all municipalities are relying to some extent on the growth that's coming. "You cannot sustain a municipality without growth," he says. "If growth stagnates, so does the community." For him, then, "It's very important to encourage growth. And it's also very important that that growth is managed, and what the region is doing now… to eliminate the sprawl."[441] Thus the proposal to grow up instead of out meets Armstrong's goals.

For Armstrong, growth means his township needs to attract new businesses to provide new jobs. New residents also bring new expectations, which also need to be managed. "They buy a lot back here, backing onto the farmland, and then they call and say, isn't there a 200 meter buffer zone for manure spreading?" he recounts. "I'm afraid not," he tells them. But he says that both regional council and his area municipal council are committed to these hard lines protecting the countryside. "The line I use to people, I say, you know, I don't know about you, but I do enjoy having food on my table. And that's where it comes from." He believes the township council is with him on that point. "[Wilmot] Council, for the most part, pretty well to the man, support the idea of saying, hey, you moved here. It was here first. You have to learn to live with it." But he knows that this could change with a future council.[442]

Armstrong says he wasn't introduced to issues around growth management until he was elected. "A lot of people don't have an understanding as to how government works," he tells me. "They don't have an understanding because they don't live it." Armstrong says people tell him

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[441] Ibid.

[442] Ibid.

government should be run like a business. Businesses are "doing one thing," while municipalities are "providing all kinds of services under one form of income."[443]

Armstrong supported appealing the OMB ruling to divisional court. In telling me about it, he highlights two main reasons. The first is that regional council has a legitimate role to play in growth management. "I mean, [the decision] also sets a precedent that … we're going to let them do whenever they want. And that's not the idea. We're there for a reason. To manage the growth."[444]

The second is that he thinks the development industry needs guidance, or they'll build haphazardly. He describes it to me using a colourful analogy of giving candies to children: "They want the whole bag, but you can only give them a couple at a time. Otherwise they'll eat the whole bag right away. … Or a dog," he says. "The dog, you give him a bowl full of food, and that's his food. Because if you left the bag sitting there, he'd just eat the bag and then throw it all up."[445]

While Armstrong's exposure to growth management issues waited until he got into politics, his exposure to regional government in the area goes back much farther. "I'm a preacher's kid," he tells me. Born in London, Ontario, his family moved to Hespeler when he was in elementary school. He's lived in Waterloo Region ever since. "Except for four years when I was in the Navy," he tells me.[446]

Armstrong has seen both the frenzied and the routine effects of the province's waves of local government reform in the Waterloo area. He served on Wilmot Council at the end of the

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[443] Ibid.

[444] Ibid.

[445] Ibid.

[446] Ibid.

1990s,[447] during the fractious regional reform during the Harris years. He fought the reduction of

rural representation on regional council and on his own council around the turn of the century.[448]

But his first introduction to regional rationalization was much less controversial. He had been

hired as a police officer by the City of Kitchener in 1972, four months before the Region was

created and took over policing. I ask him what the transition was like. "Not much different," he

says. "I mean, they just gave me a different badge." He stayed with the Waterloo Regional Police

Service for 13 years, 10 of them working in Wilmot Township,[449] before getting elected to

township council.

I'm curious about whether he sees regional government as a source of conflict or as a

source of strength. So I ask him about the most visible dispute between the area municipalities

during the 2010 to 2014 council term: Wilmot put in tar and chip on part of the Wilmot Line,[450]

on the border with the City of Waterloo and near some of the city's urban development near the

ESL. The city, which provides winter maintenance for the line, objected to Wilmot's paving on

environmental grounds.[451] Tempers flared, and Armstrong said the City's position was

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[447] "Ward 4, Two Candidates for One Seat (in Wilmot Township)," *Kitchener-Waterloo Record*, November 6, 2000, Final edition, sec. Local.

[448] Anne Kelly, "Regional Reforms Face Wilmot Opposition; Township Must Retain Control of Water Services and Strong Rural Voice on Council, Meeting Told," *Kitchener-Waterloo Record*, April 30, 1999, Final edition, sec. Local; Anne Kelly, "Wilmot Downsizes to 4 from 6 Wards," *Kitchener-Waterloo Record*, May 11, 2000, Final edition, sec. Local.

[449] Les Armstrong, interview by author, Baden, ON.

[450] Paige Desmond, "Wilmot Line Agreement Slowly Coming Together," *Waterloo Region Record*, November 1, 2013, First edition, sec. Local.

[451] Jeff Outhit, "Waterloo, Wilmot Councils Try to Put Tiff behind Them," *Waterloo Region Record*, August 16, 2011, First edition, sec. Local.

"hypocritical," since "there's development going on right alongside that road,"[452] where the controversial Vista Hills development is taking place on the city's side.

I ask him whether, despite issues like this that pop up, the local tiers generally get along well. He thinks they do. On the winter maintenance for the Line, he tells me, "Somebody, I guess, finally decided that we should have a written agreement with Waterloo."[453]

Armstrong agrees that regional government generally works well here. He acknowledges that there's some controversy about the overrepresentation of the rural municipalities on regional council. "There has always been, in the past, some angst about the fact that the four townships, with the total population of about 60 [or] 65,000, have four representatives, where … the other 480,000 people, have twelve representatives," he explains. "The parity isn't there. And I understand that statement," he says. "But I think … the whole idea is to encourage working together. I mean now, what we do, if we're getting paving done? The asphalt will be ordered or done through an agreement with two or three different municipalities. We'll work together to come up with that. Or other items, too, if you're ordering salt or whatever. Then you can get it at a cheaper rate. And that works for everybody, you know? Things are available for us to share."[454]

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[452] Jeff Outhit, "Pave a Road, Start a Fight; Wilmot Township and Waterloo Are Feuding over Complaints about Paving Adjacent to Subdivision Site," *Waterloo Region Record*, July 20, 2011, First edition, sec. News.

[453] Les Armstrong, interview by author, Baden, ON.

[454] Ibid.

Ross Kelterborn

Just as Mayor Armstrong of Wilmot has a long history in township politics, so does former mayor Ross Kelterborn of Wellesley. A former high school shop teacher,[455] Kelterborn retired at age 75, at the end of the 2010 to 2014 council term,[456] after eleven years as mayor.[457]

Kelterborn is perhaps as traditional of a rural politician as you'll find in Waterloo Region. "I'm a small town boy," he tells me over the phone on a September day, from his home in Wellesley Township. "Always have been, always will be."[458] Others see him the same way, including Chair Seiling. "Ross is a very gentle soul, very reflective in some ways of an older style of rural politics, very concerned about local issues," Seiling told the newspaper on the occasion of Kelterborn's retirement.[459]

Kelterborn's roots in the township are deep. He lives in Wellesley Village, where he grew up, and he has watched his small town expand considerably over the course of his life. Kelterborn got into politics in 1973,[460] serving on the first Wellesley Township Council after the regional amalgamation. Before the creation of the amalgamated township, Wellesley Village had been by far the smallest municipality in what would become Waterloo Region, with just over 800

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[455] Colin Hunter, "Carousel Man; In Wellesley a Childhood Obsession Has Become a Mayor's Pride and Joy," *Waterloo Region Record*, May 10, 2008, Final edition, sec. Front.

[456] Paige Desmond, "Wellesley Mayor Retiring after 31 Years in Politics," *Waterloo Region Record*, May 7, 2014, sec. News.

[457] Outhit, "New Regional Councillors Argue for Restoring Old Links with Cities"; Brent Davis, "Races Heating up in Townships Race for Wilmot Mayor Wide Open; Woolwich's Strauss Has His First Challengers in a Decade," *Waterloo Region Record*, October 12, 2010, Final edition, sec. News.

[458] Ross Kelterborn, interview by author, Wellesley Village, ON, September 21, 2016.

[459] Desmond, "Wellesley Mayor Retiring after 31 Years in Politics."

[460] Ibid.

residents.[461] "I've seen this place grow from when I was a kid," he says. "There might have been between 4[00]and 500 people [who] lived here. Now we're getting close to 3000."[462]

When I ask him about growth management, Kelterborn focuses on servicing capacity. He tells me that growth in Wellesley Village has largely been constrained by the limited capacity of municipal infrastructure. The sewer system put into the area in the 1970s was limited by the amount of effluent the Nith River could handle under existing treatment technology. Better sewage treatment has allowed more growth. "In Wellesley [Village], as long as we can put stuff into that sanitary sewer plant and stay within whatever the rules are as to what you can put into the Nith River, we'll continue to grow here," he tells me.[463] The Regional Official Plan agrees with him; the plan designates Wellesley Village as the township's only Township Urban Area, where some greenfield lands have been designated for urban expansion.[464]

But in his decades in township politics, Kelterborn has dealt with plenty of people who buy land hoping that current rules will be changed and they will be able to build what they want on it. He recalls one institutionally zoned plot, intended for a nursing home. Its new landowner pushed hard for a zone change. "I point blank ask him, 'Why aren't you supporting our township?'" Kelterborn recalls. "'You build a nursing home there.' And he'd have nothing to do with it."[465]

He expects these sorts of conflicts to continue. "People … have bought up farms, parts of farms and so on around this village, but they anticipate that they will make an application," he

[461] Fyfe and Farrow, "Report of Findings and Recommendations," 26.

[462] Ross Kelterborn, interview by author, Wellesley Village, ON.

[463] Ibid.

[464] Region of Waterloo, "Regional Official Plan," June 18, 2015.

[465] Ross Kelterborn, interview by author, Wellesley Village, ON.

explains. "Then it'll be up to the council of the day, plus the regional council, to determine where this growth is going to take place."[466]

In dealing with pressures for urban expansion, Kelterborn is concerned about preservation of farmland. Kelterborn spent years trying to get various provincial governments to change the way that farmland is assessed for municipal property tax purposes. Part of Mike Harris's changes to municipalities was a 75% reduction in the property tax revenue municipalities received from farmland. Before Harris, only 25% of property taxes would be paid by the farmer to the province, and the provincial government would pay the municipalities 100% of the amount. Now, farmers pay the 25% to the municipalities, and the province doesn't cover the difference.[467] This penalizes municipalities for their farmland. Kelterborn wants provincial and federal governments to cover that 75%.[468] "Like oil, like natural gas, like all the environmental things that come from the earth, [they] belong to everybody," he says. "So in my opinion, everybody should help to pay for the preservation of agricultural land, just not the taxpayers of the rural places." Given his long-term concern for agricultural preservation, it's not surprising that Kelterborn tells me he supported the Region's appeal of the OMB ruling. When I ask him, he doesn't miss a beat. "You bet," he tells me.[469]

Kelterborn's sense of joint responsibility has been visible throughout his comments on regional government. As Seiling said, "Quite often, you find in regional or county politics this

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[466] Ibid.

[467] Siegel, "Municipal Reform in Ontario: Revolutionary Evolution," 136.

[468] Davis, "Races Heating up in Townships Race for Wilmot Mayor Wide Open; Woolwich's Strauss Has His First Challengers in a Decade."

[469] Ross Kelterborn, interview by author, Wellesley Village, ON.

ability to say that we're all in this together – that was Ross's style."[470] Like Armstrong,

Kelterborn defended regional government against the Harris onslaught in the 1990s. He pushed

back against provincial efforts to reduce the size of councils.[471] He argued the two-tier reform

plan that had local agreement was the best for the township and the region.[472] When I ask him

today, he thinks regional government "works well, pretty well all of the time." He places credit

for that pretty squarely on those around the regional council table. "That's up to the 16 guys that

are sitting around the table down there," he says.[473]

As mayor of a smaller township, Kelterborn recently became most visible to those in the

cities over LRT. He didn't say much about LRT after the original 2009 vote. He didn't have a

public campaign stance on the project during the 2010 election,[474] when he was acclaimed to his

third term in office.[475] He developed a reputation for refusing to say how he would vote to the

press, and during the debates immediately before the votes themselves. "I held my cards very

close to my chest, and I'm going to right 'till the end," he said the night of the 2011 vote, to the

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[470] Desmond, "Wellesley Mayor Retiring after 31 Years in Politics."

[471] Lise Diebel, "Wellesley Backs Most Reform Suggestions," *Kitchener-Waterloo Record*, June 8, 1999, Final edition, sec. Local.

[472] Steve Cannon, "Region Expected to Favour Two-Tier Model," *Kitchener-Waterloo Record*, July 6, 2000, Final edition, sec. Local.

[473] Ross Kelterborn, interview by author, Wellesley Village, ON.

[474] Jeff Outhit, "Anti-Rail Group Fears Broken Election Promises," *Waterloo Region Record*, May 31, 2011, First edition, sec. News.

[475] Davis, "Races Heating up in Townships Race for Wilmot Mayor Wide Open; Woolwich's Strauss Has His First Challengers in a Decade."

amusement of the tense crowd in council chambers. "You won't know – I'm not going to tell you how I'm going to vote until I push that button," he told the crowd.[476]

At the crucial moment, Kelterborn pushed the button for LRT, as he had two years earlier.[477] Despite his solid rural experience and identity, Kelterborn has some big city exposure to transit. He tells me the same story he told around the council table the night of the LRT vote in 2011, about his time living in Toronto for teachers' college many decades ago. "I got to appreciate some of the things about the city," he says. "Transportation was one of them. I had a car and it took me three months to figure out … I could drive to Bloor and Spadina in 10 minutes. The problem was to find a parking place," he laughs.[478] Even though it took him an hour to take the streetcar,[479] as he explained the evening of the vote, "it was better for me to use transit in the City of Toronto to get where I was going."[480] He wouldn't have to park or worry about driving.

From his experience, Kelterborn acknowledges that people in his township won't use the system. "It'll be a benefit to people who live in the downtown and the university kids that ride on

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[476] His comments were often cryptic, provoking cheerful laughter from the crowd at tense meetings. "Strange things happen to me in my life. Tonight, we had Chinese dinner. And with that Chinese dinner comes some fortune cookies. And lo and behold, I opened this fortune cookie, and what it said was this: you are headed in the right direction. Trust your instincts. And that's what I've done." "Region of Waterloo Council" (Kitchener, ON: Rogers TV Waterloo Region, June 15, 2011).

[477] Region of Waterloo, "Regional Council Minutes: Tuesday, June 16, 2009"; Region of Waterloo, "Regional Council Minutes: Wednesday, June 15, 2011," June 15, 2011.

[478] Ross Kelterborn, interview by author, Wellesley Village, ON.

[479] Ibid.

[480] "Region of Waterloo Council."

it," he tells me.[481] When asked about his support for LRT, Kelterborn acknowledges the tension

created by the fact that he and his rural colleagues were voting on something that only the city

residents would pay for. "It was a tricky situation, let me tell you, because especially when we

didn't have to pay," he chuckles.[482]

But he links his support to his beliefs about his responsibility as a regional councillor. He

wanted to support the position of the councillors representing those who would be paying. "As

long as my township was not paying, I felt it was my responsibility to … read what was going on

in the cities," he says. "I was aware of what the councillors … the way they spoke and, you

know, I wanted to support them. Because I felt they were there to represent the people," he

recalls. "After I analyzed all that stuff, it was my choice to determine what's best for the future

of the Region of Waterloo, in the province of Ontario, in the country of Canada. And the globe.

That was my job, and that's why I voted for it."[483]

I ask him about why he thought LRT was the best for the future of the region. He tells me

about the importance of agricultural preservation, based on building more high-rises. Now

retired, his own views seem sympathetic to the Region's predictions about changes in seniors'

housing preferences. "They build these big homes here in Wellesley, and there's only two people

living in them," he says. "And I just can't understand it. But I understand, and I think that's the

reason why, after you get to my age – and of course my wife died when she was 60 years old and

I'm sitting here in a bungalow and a big lot and, you know, I don't need this," he tells me. "It

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[481] Ross Kelterborn, interview by author, Wellesley Village, ON.

[482] Ibid.

[483] Ibid.

would be good for me to be in an apartment of some description, you know? So I don't have anything to deal with."[484]

Kelterborn seems to have a genuine sense of the fact that the world is changing from his era, and a genuine curiosity that has not been eclipsed by his retirement. He is as interested in me as I am in him. He wants to know more about how I live in the city, and how I get around. Do I live in an apartment? Do I own a car? I tell him about my apartment in Waterloo, about how we rent a car when we need one, but otherwise rely on transit.

He pauses thoughtfully. "Is that a good way to live?" he asks me with genuine curiosity.

"You know, I like it a lot," I tell him.[485]

Todd Cowan

I meet Todd Cowan on a cold February day, at the Starbucks near the university. In his early 50s,[486] the former mayor of Woolwich Township is out of politics these days. Despite efforts from LRT opponents to vote out project supporters,[487] Cowan was the only member of regional council who lost their re-election bid in 2014. Just as Cowan had unseated the long-time Woolwich mayor in 2010, reducing him to third place,[488] Cowan himself came in fourth in the 2014 election.[489]

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[484] Ibid.

[485] Ibid.

[486] "Todd Cowan," *Waterloo Region Record*, October 16, 2014, sec. News.

[487] "Defeat Waterloo Region Council," October 4, 2014,
https://web.archive.org/web/20141004191738/http://www.defeatwrcouncil.com/.

[488] Caldwell, "Night of the Incumbents Top Four Municipal Leaders All Returning for Another Term."

[489] Caldwell, "New Faces, Same Course in Waterloo Region Municipal Election."

Yet his loss was not about LRT. During the election, he had been under the scrutiny of an Ontario Provincial Police investigation for submitting the same expense claims to both the Region and either the Grand River Conservation Authority or the Township.[490] A judge eventually found Cowan guilty of breach of trust, though he was cleared of fraud charges.[491] But Woolwich voters had already made their judgement on election night. Cowan would spend only one term in Woolwich politics.

Over the bustle of students ordering whipped coffees and the noise of the coffee grinder, I ask Cowan about his perspectives on growth management. Over the next hour and a half, he most often talks about the concept of balance,[492] like he did when he was first elected.[493]

"I've always been a firm believer about managed growth," he tells me. "When you look at some other municipalities where … they just grow, grow, grow, grow, grow, because of the assessment, and they can keep taxes low. And I think a balanced approach is more – when you look at [the] long-term, for townships or municipalities, you can't always rely on that sort of tax base."[494]

He invokes balance when talking about his views of the Countryside Line, too. "Countryside lines are good in theory," he says, "but I think that we have to be reasonable, too." Cowan thinks the lines will have to move eventually, or the decision to fully stop expansion

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[490] Desmond, "OPP Investigating Woolwich Mayor Todd Cowan over Expenses."

[491] Flanagan, "Todd Cowan Sentenced to Probation, Community Service."

[492] Todd Cowan, interview by author, Waterloo, ON.

[493] Brent Davis, "New Township Mayors Eye Regional Roles," *Waterloo Region Record*, October 27, 2010, Final edition, sec. News.

[494] Todd Cowan, interview by author, Waterloo, ON.

somewhere down the road will hurt economic development efforts. Cowan believes attracting

businesses is a crucial goal of growth management.[495]

I'm curious about what his township council in Woolwich thought about urban growth

boundaries. He tells me about a noticeable split between newer councillors and those who had

been involved in township politics for many years. "You have the new councillors in that maybe

don't have the same … history with what's gone on in the past," he says. "And they say, you

know what, we need to be a little more fluid on these type[s] of hard, fast things."[496]

Cowan himself might be one of those new entrants focused on fluidity, but he is no

stranger to rural life. He grew up on a farm in Kent County, and studied farm marketing and

management at the University of Guelph.[497] But his journey didn't run straight from the farm to

the mayor's chair. It took a long road through Queen's Park. He had a history of involvement

with the Liberal party, he tells me, and eventually went to work for Dalton McGuinty as a special

assistant in southwestern Ontario[498] in 1999.[499] When the Liberals became government, he

worked in various ministries.[500] From the government side, he became aware of municipal

lobbying efforts, or the lack thereof. "Provincial politicians, they want to hear from the local

municipalities," he says. "So I saw how effective that was, or [how] ineffective it could be if you

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[495] Ibid.

[496] Ibid.

[497] Ibid.

[498] Ibid.

[499] "Todd Cowan."

[500] Todd Cowan, interview by author, Waterloo, ON.

don't know what you're doing. And there was a number of municipalities that didn't know what they were doing."[501]

So Cowan was conscious of a lack of attention to provincial advocacy in his township when he left Queen's Park, and wanted to change that. But it was a growth management issue that would finally vault him into Woolwich politics. The township was proposing to build homes on a portion of one of its parks to raise revenues to cover the cost of recent capital projects. "I looked at it, and I talked to a few people, and I said jeez, this seems a bit odd. The municipality who owns the land wants to develop the land themselves. Then they want to build houses and they want to sell the houses," he explains. "I felt that the way they were doing it … wasn't forthright." He joined with the area's neighbours to start a petition and advocate against the development to council. "So we were successful," he recalls. "But I felt … the township didn't go far enough. So … I had said that if I got elected, I would go in and I would rezone the whole thing as permanent green space."[502] During his term of office, the township bought regional lands and completed a park in the area.[503]

After fighting back and winning on one development, it's not surprising that Cowan would be willing to push back against other development interests. He supported the Region's decision to appeal the OMB ruling. He feels the Region's official plan was in line with provincial planning requirements, and those appealing simply weren't happy that their land hadn't been slated for urban expansion. "It's just because you're not happy with how the region has planned growth. Because you have deep pockets and you just think you can just appeal, or

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[501] Ibid.

[502] Ibid.

[503] James Jackson, "Securing Elmira's Victoria Glen as Green Space," *ObserverXtra*, November 25, 2011, https://observerxtra.com/2011/11/25/acquisition-of-regional-land-secures-elmiras-victoria-glen-as-green-space/.

take everything to the OMB," he says. "Of course we're going to appeal it. We had to appeal it. And the province I'm sure has also had to support that choice. Because if we would have not challenged it, and appealed it, basically that flies in the face of the province, too."[504]

His experiences with the big OMB issue in Woolwich township, fighting aggregate mining in historic areas, has reinforced his belief that the OMB needs to be reformed. Right now, "if we disagree with anything, it doesn't matter if it's tea or coffee, I'll just take you to the OMB," he says. "It has to have a spot where you come in and say, okay, what's reasonable here? Like really, what's reasonable."[505]

Cowan's focus on balance implies a sense of compromise when it comes to development. Still, he wasn't thrilled with the final resolution of the OMB case. His municipality was a large part of where growth was being directed, on the East Side Lands in Woolwich. He thought both the region's calculations on the lands needed and the locations they had set for it had been correct. The settlement provided additional lands for expansion on the west side of the urban complex, particularly in southwest Kitchener. "I thought it went a little bit too far, like literally, the other way," he tells me. "Because it's going to take away the emphasis on where we wanted. And that's what managed growth is all about."[506]

When it comes to LRT, managed growth is certainly a big part of his support for the project. Cowan changed his early election stance,[507] and voted for LRT in 2011.[508] His policy reasons focus on the same kinds of growth issues. He's concerned about managing the impacts of

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[504] Todd Cowan, interview by author, Waterloo, ON.

[505] Ibid.

[506] Ibid.

[507] "TriTAG Candidate Questionnaire 2010."

[508] Region of Waterloo, "Regional Council Minutes: Wednesday, June 15, 2011," June 15, 2011.

population increases. "I looked at it from a point of view of growth, of saying, wow … our growth projections for the region, and for the townships, is huge. We're going to grow like crazy. And we're already starting to see backup on the 85 [highway], and we have to do something about it."[509]

But what strikes me most about his comments is his genuine concern for public opinion. Cowan was the only regional councillor who would vote for LRT, but also for having a referendum.[510] He told the paper at the time, "We're elected by the people to represent the people. We have to listen to the people."[511]

In the absence of a referendum, Cowan had to take his own steps to listen to the people. "Initially, I was kind of reluctant, because I heard, well, why do the townships have a say in it? Because they're not paying for it, anyway." Unlike his urban colleagues, Cowan says he didn't hear about LRT during his election canvassing. "I knocked on a lot of doors in 2010," he tells me. "And I don't think I heard it once." He tells me about the informal online poll he had put on the township website for residents to weigh in on the project.[512] In justifying his position in advance of the big vote, he told the assembled crowd that 82 percent of those sharing their views supported rapid transit and 66 percent supported light rail.[513] "I said OK, we're in favor of this," he tells me. "So then I started looking at it, and I looked at it from a point of view of growth."

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[509] Todd Cowan, interview by author, Waterloo, ON.

[510] Region of Waterloo, "Regional Council Minutes: Wednesday, June 1, 2011," 4.

[511] D'Amato, "Will There Be a Referendum?"

[512] Todd Cowan, interview by author, Waterloo, ON.

[513] "The LRT Decision: What Regional Councillors Said," *Waterloo Region Record*, June 17, 2011, First edition, sec. News.

Beyond public opinion, though, private opinion was at play. The LRT controversy came with pressure from colleagues. "Unfortunately that issue was very polarizing between mayors," he tells me. "It's kind of like when people say, well, you're an intelligent person, Kate, so therefore you have to make an intelligent decision, and if you don't support LRT, that's not very intelligent. And I was getting that."[514]

Still, he sees the review of the project at the beginning of his term as a crucial way of checking in with the new council about the direction that was being taken. "When I got there, everything had been done, and basically we were moving forward," he says. "So then it was like, okay, let's stop the train and back it up a bit, and basically rehash it again to make sure this council, 2010 to 14, is in agreement."[515]

I ask Cowan about how he thinks two-tier government works in Waterloo Region. He mentions an example or two of where the Region might have overstepped, like opposing Woolwich's move to be the site of an Ontario Lottery and Gaming casino during his term of office. But for the most part, he tells me the region helps with service provision in the smaller townships, and the two-tier system helps accommodate different priorities in different areas. But he places the success of regional government in Waterloo squarely on the shoulders of those around the table. "I think in this region it works," he tells me. "But I think it works because of the leadership that we have there on both the upper tier and lower tier," he adds. "It may not work if there was different leadership." [516]

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[514] Todd Cowan, interview by author, Waterloo, ON.

[515] Ibid.

[516] Ibid.

Rob Deutschmann

I'm set to meet with Rob Deutschmann at his law practice on a sunny October afternoon.
I walk to his office from the Charles Street bus terminal, picking my way carefully across
Downtown Kitchener streets torn up by LRT construction until I reach the renovated historic
building.

Deutschmann spent one term as the mayor of the Township of North Dumfries. He won
his first political campaign in 2010 to become mayor. But he chose not to run again in 2014. "I
kept my full-time [law] practice," he tells me. "It was like burning the candles at both ends," he
says.[517]

Deutschmann wasn't new to politics. But while he had been involved with the Young
Liberals in the 1980s, any political aspirations he had as a younger man faded with age and
family. It was a community project that brought him to township politics. "I got elected because I
just wanted to get a community center done," he tells me. "I was just Joe community guy." He
tells me that his efforts to consider adding a second ice pad to reduce future costs[518] hit road
blocks at the mayor's office. "It was like, no. No, no, no. Without any discussion. And to me, …
that's just not how government should be. You should be able to have those discussions."[519] So
he ran against the mayor[520] and won.[521] "I was actually trying to find someone else to run," he
explains. "It just became more of an extension of community involvement."[522]

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[517] Rob Deutschmann, interview by author, Kitchener, ON.

[518] Brent Davis, "Group Seeks Second Ice Pad," *Waterloo Region Record*, September 3, 2009, Final
edition, sec. Local.

[519] Rob Deutschmann, interview by author, Kitchener, ON.

[520] Melinda Dalton, "Township Mayoral Battles Promise Some Fireworks," *Waterloo Region Record*, July
28, 2010, Final edition, sec. Local.

Deutschmann's relatively quick entrance and exit gave him considerable perspective on the role that municipal staff play in supporting elected officials. "People … are involved in the community, and they're now suddenly thrust in this role, involved with billion dollar budgets with the region, or million dollar budgets like the township. So it becomes difficult because you're relying on your staff, who are there year to year, to let you know whether you're on track or not on track."[523]

Growth management is a file like that. Yet some of Deutschmann's earliest comments, the day after his election, highlight the balancing act faced by rural politicians in a growing region. "Certainly we want to maintain our rural heritage as much as possible," he told a Record reporter immediately after his election, "But we have to have growth somewhere in the township if the township is going to prosper."[524]

Eventually, in his new role, Deutschmann found that official plan issues were necessarily driven by staff. This was particularly a problem for his council in North Dumfries, which did not have a permanent planning staff member when Deutschmann began his job as mayor:

> we didn't have enough discussion about official plan issues [at township council].
> And part of that, in my view – just the way the system is. I mean you have your
> 'politicians.' I use quotation marks. You have your politicians, who are people that
> are like, you know, a schoolteacher, a homemaker, a lawyer, a farmer, what have
> you, right? People with really no background in any of the minutiae of all of that.
> And you have your staff. And as much as you don't want to say you're directed by
> staff, you need to be directed by staff. Because you need to be advised, okay, what
> are the areas that we should be looking at, what should we be doing. And I think the
> amount of debate you have, the amount of work you do, some of it is driven by …

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[521] Davis, "New Township Mayors Eye Regional Roles."

[522] Rob Deutschmann, interview by author, Kitchener, ON.

[523] Ibid.

[524] Davis, "New Township Mayors Eye Regional Roles."

the objectives of the people that are elected. But a large part of it is driven by the staff that you have.[525]

When I ask him about the OMB ruling, Deutschmann cites the importance of staff advice in his support for the decision to appeal. "I think the appeal was the right thing to do," he says. "If you asked any of the politicians, they wouldn't be able to tell you what [the land budget] was. Again, we're relying on staff. So if staff is telling me that there's some issues about the way the land formula is being calculated, and this is … provincially mandated, and … OMB wasn't necessarily following it. Then I'm saying yeah, okay, let's appeal that."[526]

But his support for staff's position is tempered by his own reservations about certain aspects of the Regional Official Plan. Deutschmann thinks the Region's land budget went too far. "The regional position was 80 [hectares]," he says. "I didn't agree with that position. But, I didn't agree that 1000 was the right answer, either."[527]

Deutschmann's hesitation over the Region's land budget is based on its position on the decline of aging in place. It just doesn't fit with his own experience. "Look at your own family. Who wants to be out of their home when they're 60? Nobody does. People want to stay in their homes as long as they can," he says. "I wasn't completely buying that, based on where I came from," he tells me. "My … German grandfather was 93 years old, still living in his home. My

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[525] Rob Deutschmann, interview by author, Kitchener, ON.

[526] While Deutschmann supported the appeal of the ruling, he was less convinced by the procedural fairness complaint the Region later filed. He thought the complaint was a reasonable strategy for the Region to take, but without having his own knowledge of the details in the specific incident, he's familiar with the importance of continuing education in legal settings. Ibid.

[527] Ibid.

father is 79, you know, still living in the home, his house." He tells me it's about dignity. "Part of that is being able to stay in your home as long as you can."[528]

Yet even in staking out a position that questions aspects of the official plan, Deutschmann qualifies his objections. "But that's me with a rough overview. Whether I was right – I'm likely more wrong than right on these things." And Deutschmann is firmly behind other aspects of the plan. "We have to be mindful of our environment as well," he tells me. "I think that is a crucial element that I really have come to learn about over my four years." He sees the connections between local land use planning and global environmental problems like climate change. "I appreciate the purpose of the Countryside Line, because you need that balance in terms of being environmentally conscious, you know, doing what we can in whatever small way we can with respect to issues like climate change," he says. "If you have development growth all over the place, it's not good planning and it's not good science necessarily."[529]

Deutschmann's split feelings on the official plan were largely addressed by the settlement the Region reached with the greenfield developers. He was pleased with the settlement. Most of the cases in his law practice are resolved by a reaching a settlement, and he sees the Region's attempts to negotiate as a conciliatory move. And resolutions through courts mean uncertainty of what the courts might decide. "Through mediation, you have certainty," he explains. "Because you're making that decision." And while he notes that the OMB agreed with him on aging in place, he didn't agree with the developers' numbers. "I didn't think 1000 was the correct one. Again, why, I don't know," he laughs. "I guess there's Mr. Compromise."[530]

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[528] Ibid.

[529] Ibid.

[530] Ibid.

Deutschmann was the only rural mayor who never voted for LRT. Then again, he never voted against it, either. Deutschmann owns the building we're sitting in, near a station on the new LRT line. He declared a pecuniary interest under the Municipal Conflict of Interest Act in February of 2011, because the LRT project was expected to increase his property's value.[531]

I have very little idea what Deutschmann will say about LRT. He avoided talking about it during the election[532] and in his early days as mayor.[533] He was the only councillor who continued to declare a conflict on the project to the end of his council term in 2014.[534] He did note, upon leaving office, that his single regret was not being involved in the LRT discussions and decisions.[535]

"I support LRT, absolutely," he tells me. Despite having been a township mayor, Deutschmann has a clear view of the core of the region's urban areas. He grew up on the same central Waterloo street that I did, and has spent 20 years living in Ayr, North Dumfries' largest urban area, while running his practice out of Downtown Kitchener. He acknowledges he has an interest in the property values of the building we're sitting in, and that it helped raise his awareness of the potential effects on downtown development. "But I'm born and raised in

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[531] Outhit, "Township Mayor Declares Rapid Transit Conflict."

[532] "TriTAG Candidate Questionnaire 2010."

[533] Kevin Swayze, "Rapid Doesn't Have to Mean Rails; Zehr, Craig Comment on Future of Regional Transit," *Waterloo Region Record*, December 9, 2010, First edition, sec. Local.

[534] Paige Desmond, "Regional Chair Candidate Selling Property to Avoid LRT Conflict," *Waterloo Region Record*, October 6, 2014, sec. News.

[535] Desmond, "Regional Councillors Say 'Thanks for the Memories.'"

Waterloo Region, so I feel like I can express an opinion on the growth and development and the future Waterloo Region as much as anybody else," he says.[536]

Despite his support for the project, Deutschmann isn't sure about the timing of LRT. He wonders if Ottawa might have been a model for what should have been done here: building up ridership by developing the transit system before putting in LRT, as Ottawa is doing now. But he suggests it's worth building LRT today, even though it might be too early, since they managed to get the money together to do it. "In the grand scheme of things, over a hundred year period, what's five years? Just get it done, get it in. And we're starting to see growth from it."[537]

Still, despite his support, he thinks LRT is having a restraining effect on what the Region is able to do. "I called it a boa constrictor on the finances of the region," he says. In 2014, he suggested LRT costs were part of the reason there was pressure to close rural waste transfer stations,[538] even though the project itself is area rated to tax bills in the cities. "If there's a concern about the tax rate increase … a component of that is the area rating for the LRT. So then, when you say we don't have enough money to keep a waste transfer station open, it's because that is affecting everything."[539]

In considering that broad regional picture, Deutschmann has a clear view of why the Region is good for the smaller townships. He speaks highly of the Region and its staff, and believes the services and expertise the Region provides is particularly crucial for small townships

[536] Rob Deutschmann, interview by author, Kitchener, ON.

[537] Ibid.

[538] Paige Desmond, "LRT Blamed for Rural Waste Station Closures," *Waterloo Region Record*, March 28, 2014, First edition, sec. Local.

[539] Rob Deutschmann, interview by author, Kitchener, ON.

like North Dumfries.[540] He contrasts the styles of the two levels, particularly among staff, describing the larger regional government as more rigid. "The Region can be pretty hardcore in terms of their positions," he explains, "whereas the Township wants to be – maybe appear to be a little more flexible."[541]

If there's one area where Deutschmann thinks more coordination is necessary in the regional system, it's economic development. One of the first issues he was thrust into as a new mayor was that Dr. Oetker wanted to open a pizza shell plant in the township, and he found himself having to coordinate between various groups. "That was a very difficult process, to get all of that coordinated." He compares us on this front to London, Toronto, and Hamilton. "All these big places are coordinated. And they're just going to zoom by us if we don't do the same thing." For companies, dealing with seven area municipalities is "too much work." For Deutschmann, the new Waterloo Region Economic Development Corporation that has just started, a partnership between the seven area municipalities and the Region,[542] is the right start. But for Deutschmann, economic development is linked to land use planning. The next step is "land development …. Because we need to have ready commercial land, so that when an industry is coming to our area, we're ready to provide them with an opportunity." This goes beyond the regional plans to focus such expansion in the East Side Lands. The townships have a great deal of the land. With easy access to the 401, Deutschmann sees North Dumfries as having huge potential for commercial development. But given limited finances, North Dumfries alone

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[540] Ibid.

[541] Ibid.

[542] Waterloo Region Economic Development Corporation, "Annual Report 2015," June 28, 2016, http://www.wredc.ca/en/about-wredc/annual-report-2015.asp.

doesn't have the resources to prepare those lands for commercial development. Regional involvement would be necessary.[543]

When it comes to the broad regional government picture, Deutschmann gives me the most amusing description I've heard so far: "I've described it as Snow White and the seven dwarfs," he says playfully. "The cities and townships are all the seven dwarfs, and Snow White is the Region. So we all do what we can to keep Snow White going. But the fact is, we all get to have our unique personalities. I always said, I called Doug Craig grumpy," he jokes. "But we all have our unique personalities ….it's that fine line, and we're all able to all coexist, and we're all able to move forward as one. But we still get to internally keep our own identity. And that's why I think we have a good model here."[544]

His joke might imply that he thinks Craig's demands are unreasonable. But on the biggest regional fight Deutschmann saw among his colleagues, his sympathies were firmly with Craig. "I sat beside Doug," he says. "So we had lots of chats at regional council." While Deutschmann missed that contentious meeting on area rating LRT for Cambridge, he published an opinion piece in the local paper arguing that Craig's motion reflected "a reasonable question to ask," and agreeing with Craig that the information Chair Seiling provided to show how much Cambridge gets back from the Region "was collateral to the core issue and caused the most damage to the regional fabric."[545]

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[543] Rob Deutschmann, interview by author, Kitchener, ON.

[544] Ibid.

[545] Rob Deutschmann, "Debate over Cambridge's Light Rail Role Took a Nasty Turn," *Waterloo Region Record*, March 24, 2014, sec. Opinion.

I ask him about the conflict. "If there's animosity between groups, you've got to look at the players," he argues. "It's not the people, it's the leaders that have to work those things out. And if there's animosity, that's a failure of leadership … on both sides of the table."[546]

Throughout our discussion, it's clear that Deutschmann thinks he made the right choice to leave after just one term. But his sense of wonder at what the position allowed him to do shines through. "For myself personally, I had to move on. But I really do wish I could have stayed on. Because once you're there, you have an opportunity to shape your community like no other opportunity."[547]

The View from the Bus

Jane Mitchell

On a September afternoon, I meet Jane Mitchell at her regional councillor office at Administrative Headquarters on Frederick Street. Now in her early 60s,[548] the former university librarian[549] has been one of the two regional councillors representing Waterloo since 2000.[550]

While we meet in her office today, I often run into Mitchell on the bus. She was the only member of the 2010 to 2014 regional council who was a regular transit user.[551] "Once my

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[546] Rob Deutschmann, interview by author, Kitchener, ON.

[547] Ibid.

[548] Beth Gallagher, "Experience Appeals to Public School Voters," *Kitchener-Waterloo Record*, November 13, 1991, Final edition, sec. Election '91.

[549] "Two to Run for Seats on Public School Board," *Kitchener-Waterloo Record*, September 14, 1994, Final edition, sec. Local.

[550] Burtt and Caldwell, "Amalgamation Will Be Hot Topic for Regional Council."

[551] Paige Desmond, "Regional Council Boasts Just One Daily Transit User," *Waterloo Region Record*, May 21, 2013, First edition, sec. Local.

daughter got older and went to Conestoga College … that's how I first started to ride the bus," Mitchell tells me. "She took the car, because she was living at home." It was around when the Region was making service improvements after creating Grand River Transit. Before the Region took over transit, travelling between the region's cities required inter-city coach service. "Years ago, you just couldn't get there from here.… You could take the Greyhound, but I mean [to get to] Cambridge … you might as well go to Guelph."[552]

Things have improved a lot since the Region took over transit. As she told the Record for a story in 2013, "I've been all the way down to Cambridge and up to Elmira. I've been around when it comes to Grand River Transit." She told them it was helpful for decision-makers to experience the system.[553]

"The whole King Street corridor is very, very good, if you live along that corridor, and it's going to continue to be really good," she tells me. Other areas still have problems. Though service has improved, there are times when the bus that serves her neighbourhood still only comes once every half-hour during the day, and it can be unreliable. She used to get to know the taxi drivers, who would be stopped nearby while waiting for fares, and would see her walking back home to call a taxi when she hadn't managed to catch the bus. "I'd phone them and he'd be there, the guy from around the corner, and he says, 'Yeah, I saw you walking down the road. It was only a matter of time before the call was going to come in,'" she chuckles.[554]

Mitchell believes efforts to keep the region's urban areas compact will help to provide reliable transit service to more areas. "That's where having that Countryside Line is good,

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[552] Jane Mitchell, interview by author, Kitchener, ON, September 9, 2015.

[553] Desmond, "Regional Council Boasts Just One Daily Transit User."

[554] Jane Mitchell, interview by author, Kitchener, ON.

because we're not so far out that we can't have a really good transit system all the way," she explains.[555]

Mitchell spoke in favour of the LRT project early on.[556] She maintained her support during the controversy of the 2010 election, writing a letter to the editor defending the project and its goals.[557] Yet her response to the TriTAG candidate questionnaire, given after the federal and provincial funding numbers were finalized, showed a commitment to revising the project:

> As I go door to door, unfortunately I am getting very strong resistance to the LRT and particularly to increasing property taxes for the 265 million regional share. I do not support increasing property taxes to support the current LRT proposal. I must listen to all my constituents, therefore I see two thrusts to the Rapid Transit discussion after the election. 1. A staff report on LRT showing various ways we might build Light Rail Transit without raising property taxes. 2. Put the Bus Rapid Transit project back on the table.[558]

In a story about issue, the paper had previously cut the other portions of Mitchell's LRT response to TriTAG, repeating only "I do not support increasing property taxes to support the current LRT proposal."[559] She would later explain, in response to criticism of her yes vote, that financing changes were needed because of the funding shortfall before she could support the project.[560]

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[555] Ibid.

[556] Jeff Outhit, "Debaters Agree More than Disagree on Regional Issues," *Kitchener-Waterloo Record*, October 29, 2003, Final edition, sec. Local; Outhit, "Regional Council Looks a Lot like the Old One."

[557] Jane Mitchell, "Rail Plan Will Work," *Waterloo Region Record*, July 29, 2010, Final edition, sec. Editorial.

[558] "TriTAG Candidate Questionnaire 2010."

[559] Outhit, "Candidates Beat up on Transit Plan."

[560] Paige Desmond, "Most Election Candidates Wouldn't Cancel LRT," *Waterloo Region Record*, October 3, 2014, sec. News.

Mitchell wasn't pleased with the way councillors' positions on LRT in the 2010 election were represented in the media. "The way the quote was taken before the LRT, when … we had that moment where we didn't get the money that we thought from … the provincial government and we all said, but we have to have another look," she recalls. "And that was used to beat us up, as, 'Well, you said you were against the LRT.'" She's found over the years that it's not possible to effectively challenge partial depictions in the press. "You just can't fight that," she tells me. "You tend to lose."[561]

Fortunately, Mitchell sees lots of support from the public for the project, as well. She saw differences in position by age. "LRT was controversial because you're looking at, I think, two different generations," she explains. "One that had cars with fins in the 60s, and another one that has bicycles with fins."[562] But Mitchell also meets people from earlier generations who remember the old streetcars that used to run down King Street, where the LRT is being put in now, which were ripped out in the 1950s.[563] "You hear the grumpy people go, 'Well, they got rid of … the trolleys because they were no good.' But no, it was just that they were getting old and they were moving to buses," she explains. "A lot of people who grew up here actually like the trams and trolleys."[564]

While the LRT was controversial, Mitchell sees more consistent support for the Regional Official Plan. "When I talk to people about that, they're very, very happy. They don't want us

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[561] Jane Mitchell, interview by author, Kitchener, ON.

[562] Ibid.

[563] Kevin Swayze, "Century-Old Streetcar Line Found under LRT Construction," *Waterloo Region Record*, April 5, 2015, sec. News.

[564] Jane Mitchell, interview by author, Kitchener, ON.

sprawling out. Because if you just say 'sprawl,' they get it."[565] She sees particular concern from her constituents living in Waterloo. "The average person, particularly in Waterloo, where they seem to be quite environmental, they are definitely concerned about sprawl," she says. "People don't like it when they go out and they see all the farmland being paved over."[566] There's an attachment to rural life among the people who live in the cities. "People really like the countryside and the whole Mennonite thing," she says. "Especially the people that have grown up here."[567]

Mitchell is one of those people. Born in England, Mitchell moved to the area at the age of three.[568] Back then, she says, "there was just fields and farms where the University of Waterloo is now … and to go to Elmira was considered very far away."[569]

Mitchell grew up in a house one street over from where I live today in a 20-storey condo building. The city of Waterloo's historic core borders Kitchener to the south. Today, my home is about in the middle of the city, with urban growth having spread north to the city's 1973 borders. But when Mitchell grew up in this neighbourhood, this was the edge of town. "I grew up on High Street, and we were the original owners of that house," she tells me. "There was nothing … behind us. Nothing. There were apple trees. And then it slowly built up."[570]

Mitchell knows that there's been some backlash against the condo towers appearing more frequently in core areas. But she says people don't support the destruction of farmland, either.

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[565] Ibid.

[566] Ibid.

[567] Ibid.

[568] Ibid.

[569] Ibid.

[570] Ibid.

"They still want to be able to go out into the countryside, [and] get fresh fruit and vegetables." Mitchell thinks intensification can be done well. "I have said, over and over … that you can have intensification that's not big towers." There are lots of opportunities to add an additional home to large existing home lots. As for the big towers, some of it is about making the buildings look nice, which has been a problem with some of the large student-targeted apartment buildings that have been going up for years in my neighbourhood. "It's the aesthetics," she says. She highlights a recent student building in the Art Deco style. A lot of work has been done lately to improve conditions in the Northdale area, to deal with huge demand for student housing by building up the postwar inner suburban neighbourhood. She hopes that intensification in Northdale will help reduce pressure on other low-density neighbourhoods that have had a lot of student rentals, and make room for more families to return to neighbourhoods like hers.[571]

But for Mitchell, another big part of intensification is about revitalization of the downtown areas. "The downtowns seem to be reviving," she says. "What's changed is the way people think about downtowns, like Downtown Kitchener," she tells me. "When I was a kid, Downtown Kitchener was far away, but you went down there … when you were 14 or 15. This was exciting." That perception was very different by the 1990s, when her children were that age, and Conestoga Mall on the outskirts of town was the place to be, and Downtown Kitchener was seen as unsafe. "People would say to me, 'You let Gwyneth go to Downtown Kitchener? And I'm like, 'Yeah,'" Mitchell laughs. "Now I think it's reviving, and certainly a lot of that is to do with the light rail, and the fact that there's more people there, working there and living. It makes a difference."[572]

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[571] Ibid.

[572] Ibid.

Mitchell tells me she was introduced to growth management issues as a public school board trustee. She was appointed in 1990, to fill the vacancy after trustee Elizabeth Witmer was elected MPP, and Mitchell ran and won in the election the following year.[573] "Growth management is very important for the school board, because what happens is places grow, and they don't have any schools," she explains.[574] Mitchell ran on growth management in her first three regional council elections, and in the most recent one.[575]

Mitchell supports the direction of the Regional Official Plan for some very big-picture reasons. She believes we need to maintain the agricultural industry in our area, particularly in the face of climate change. She highlights recent droughts in California, where so much of our produce originates. When she used to say, "'don't depend on California,' people would look at me like, oh yes, she's crazy. She's a crazy environmentalist," she recalls. "But we can see it happening now."[576]

Mitchell has a lot of experience with water issues in the area. She joined the Grand River Conservation Authority board in 2003, and she has served as its chair since 2010.[577] For her, population growth means infrastructure is needed to protect our water from our wastewater. "It

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[573] Ibid.; Gallagher, "Experience Appeals to Public School Voters."

[574] Jane Mitchell, interview by author, Kitchener, ON.

[575] "Six Waterloo Candidates Seek Two Regional Council Seats," *Kitchener-Waterloo Record*, November 10, 2000, Final edition, sec. Local; Jeff Outhit, "Regional Race Lost in RIM Park Fireworks," *Kitchener-Waterloo Record*, November 6, 2003, Final edition, sec. Local; Jeff Outhit, "Regional Race Focuses on Groundwater, RIM Park," *Kitchener-Waterloo Record*, November 8, 2006, sec. Local; Paige Desmond, "Mitchell to Seek Fifth Term on Regional Council," *Waterloo Region Record*, January 7, 2014, sec. News.

[576] Jane Mitchell, interview by author, Kitchener, ON.

[577] "In Brief," *Waterloo Region Record*, January 28, 2011, First edition, sec. Local.

all goes into the Grand River if you don't do anything with it," she explains. "As we grow …

everybody has to poop. And it's got to go somewhere." She's seen changes as standards have

been raised and the health of the river improved through conservation efforts. "The Grand itself

is actually, overall, doing really well," she says. "Because we're upgrading the sewers, because

it's the phosphate and the nitrates and ammonia that are the real problems. And so … a lot of

animals and fish are coming back to the Grand."[578]

When it comes to the official plan, Mitchell thinks the generational shifts the Region

anticipates in transportation and living patterns are happening. "Yes, my generation drives a lot,

but when I look at Gwyneth and Bronwyn and you guys," she says of her children of my

generation, "you don't drive as much. And you shouldn't have to drive as much if we become

more … compact and urban." When she was growing up, you could walk or get around the city

by bicycle. But newer developments have produced far-flung neighbourhoods where you need a

car to get anywhere.[579]

She also agrees with regional staff that aging in place won't continue to define future

generations of older people. "People say, 'Oh, we're going to age in place.' But if you have one

of those big monster homes, you have to go up and down stairs. And [when] you start getting to

be 75, 80 years old, you are not going to keep living there. Your children will move you out, for

one thing." With fewer children being born, Mitchell thinks demographics will mean housing

turnover will happen in established neighbourhoods.[580]

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[578] Jane Mitchell, interview by author, Kitchener, ON.

[579] Ibid.

[580] Ibid.

Given her support for the vision of the Regional Official Plan, it's not surprising that she was strong is her support for appealing the OMB decision. "All of us wanted to … keep fighting," she says. "Definitely. Because it was wrong."[581]

As for the negotiated settlement, "A lot of us, myself particularly included, felt very uncomfortable that we had to negotiate and change with the developers. But I think we ended up with a fairly good deal," she tells me. "There's a couple of spots that I'm not happy about," she says, mentioning the piece of land between Waterloo's north boundary and the stockyards property at the St. Jacobs Farmer's Market in Woolwich. But she's reasonably satisfied that the deal preserved the key principles of the plan. "If we had not settled this, the regional land budget would have been what the developers wanted," she says. And the dragged-out process was holding up the kinds of projects that the Region was hoping to encourage, particularly in the industrial lands around the Regional Airport.

As for the deal itself, Mitchell suggests that mutual displeasure is a sign of success. "Nobody liked it, so it probably was good. Council didn't like it. Developers didn't like it. OMB didn't like it, because they got into trouble. So it's probably good," she chuckles.[582]

When it comes to regional government, Mitchell is fairly satisfied with the way things work. She ran on her support for maintaining two-tier government in 2000.[583] But she thinks it makes sense, as she's long suggested, for the Region to take over fire service and water.[584]

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[581] Desmond, "Mitchell to Seek Fifth Term on Regional Council."

[582] Jane Mitchell, interview by author, Kitchener, ON.

[583] "Six Waterloo Candidates Seek Two Regional Council Seats."

[584] Outhit, "Regional Race Focuses on Groundwater, RIM Park"; Jane Mitchell, interview by author, Kitchener, ON.

Still, she thinks things generally work pretty well between the two tiers, particularly with her own municipality. "Generally, in Waterloo, unless it's election time [and] somebody is running for Region, it's been very cooperative because the staff are very cooperative," she says. There have been a few times when there's been conflicting visions at the different levels; she lists LRT as an example. "Sometimes we have little blips like the light rail, but that was a case of the mayor not being for light rail but, as we know, most of the councillors were actually for it but were being political and staying out of it. Which I totally get," she adds, highlighting that she stays out of the way when the city is dealing with hot-button topics, too. She mentions a few other disputes between city and regional politicians, including some on growth management. She recalls a heated dispute with a former Waterloo mayor over the creation of the ESL that included the north corner of Waterloo. "A lot of it's more at the political level than the staff level, in my opinion," she says, and it's only a few people who are behind it. "Some people – not all politicians, but some politicians – that's how they get their press. And it's kind of annoying to those other politicians."[585]

With all of her years surviving various disputes over planning, I ask Mitchell if her perspective on growth management has changed since she first got into politics in 1990. "Not so much growth management," she says, "but the role of the cars." Mitchell writes short stories. "I've noticed that, [in] my earlier stories, they drive cars. My later ones, a lot of times, they're taking a bus."[586]

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[585] Jane Mitchell, interview by author, Kitchener, ON.

[586] Ibid.

The Committee Chairs

At regional council, it would be the regional chair and the committee chairs that really drive the broader agenda.[587]

       - Rob Deutschmann, former regional councillor and North Dumfries mayor

Tom Galloway

I meet Tom Galloway at his office at the University of Waterloo on a November morning. Galloway has long been the director of Plant Operations here.[588] Now in his mid-60s,[589] he'll be retiring from his university job in a couple of months.

As a regional councillor representing Kitchener, where he has lived all his life,[590] Galloway served as chair of the Region's Administration and Finance Committee from 1997 until the end of the 2014 council term.[591] He became chair of the Planning and Works Committee in 2014.[592] Galloway switched chair roles for the current council term when that committee's chair, Jim Wideman, retired from politics in 2014. Planning and Works is dealing with implementation of LRT, and Galloway wanted to be there to "drive the final stages of it," he tells me.[593]

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[587] Rob Deutschmann, interview by author, Kitchener, ON.

[588] "18 Kitchener Candidates Seek Four Regional Council Seats."

[589] Ibid.

[590] "Tom Galloway," *Waterloo Region Record*, October 6, 2014, sec. News.

[591] Region of Waterloo, "Meet Tom Galloway," January 22, 2015, http://www.regionofwaterloo.ca/en/regionalGovernment/tomgalloway.asp.

[592] Paige Desmond, "Region OK's High-Profile Committee Chair Posts," *Waterloo Region Record*, December 12, 2014, sec. News.

[593] Tom Galloway, interview by author, Waterloo, ON.

Yet Galloway and his committee chair colleagues had already been significantly involved in the LRT project by virtue of their chair positions. The three committee chairs have long been formally included in the Rapid Transit Steering Committee. Before the project was approved, the Regional Growth Management Steering Committee and the Rapid Transit Steering Committee was one body, and it was larger, including eight members of council and the regional chair, along with 10 staff.[594] During the implementation phase, a much smaller elected official component would be present, as the committee would meet regularly; only the three committee chairs and a Cambridge representative would be appointed,[595] joining six staff members.[596] Thus the three chairs have been involved in the details of implementation throughout the LRT project.

Galloway's views on the LRT are primarily about planning. The project is needed to drive intensification. "If it was solely a transportation tool, it would be rapid bus," he explains. "Because it can accomplish almost the same things.[597]

He's been trying to explain that for years.[598] "Every chance I had, I told people it was about growth management," he tells me. "I remember arguing with a bus driver, and he was not

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[594] Yanick Cyr, "Regional Growth Management Strategy/Rapid Transit Steering Committee," Planning, Housing and Community Services (Region of Waterloo, February 28, 2007), http://www.regionofwaterloo.ca/en/regionalGovernment/resources/CC2007-0228.pdf.

[595] Nancy Button, "Rapid Transit Project Update," Transportation and Environmental Services - Rapid Transit (Region of Waterloo, October 18, 2011), https://rapidtransit.regionofwaterloo.ca/en/multimedialibrary/resources/rtprojectupdate.pdf; Region of Waterloo, "Planning and Works Committee Minutes: Tuesday, October 18, 2011," October 18, 2011, http://www.regionofwaterloo.ca/en/regionalGovernment/resources/PM2011-1018.pdf.

[596] Frances Barrick, "Another 11 to Be Hired for Light Rail Transit," *Waterloo Region Record*, October 20, 2011, First edition, sec. Local, 11.

[597] Tom Galloway, interview by author, Waterloo, ON.

big on light rail transit. And he said, 'There's not going to be enough people.' And I said, 'Well, I'm not even worried if there's enough people. It's what it does for planning.' And his jaw dropped. And his face glazed over. And he had no idea what I was talking about."[599]

Still, Galloway says that he's been able to open people up to the possibility. "I never found anybody I couldn't convince about light rail if they gave me 10, 15 minutes. Not convince entirely, but [it] took away their opposition, their strident opposition."[600]

In speaking about the importance of intensification, Galloway sounds like someone who chaired the regional budget process for more than a decade. "I think I was convinced quite a number of years ago that we had to intensify. And that growth doesn't pay for growth. And expanding the infrastructure – the sewers, the water, the roads, particularly – is a very expensive proposition."[601]

Galloway tells me that the trip he made to Portland with other regional councillors to see their light rail system was "a turning point" for the project. They had stopped in Calgary first. The Calgary LRT system, he says, was designed to move people into and out of the downtown, but not to encourage intensification. "They really didn't care about density," he tells me. But Portland was different. "You saw what they had been able to do, and the intensification that came from it." Councillors on the trip could actually see the impact, and particularly the higher

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[598] Jeff Outhit, "Regional Candidates Feeling Slighted," *Kitchener-Waterloo Record*, November 10, 2006, sec. Local; "TriTAG Candidate Questionnaire 2010"; Paige Desmond and Jeff Outhit, "Is Light Rail Transit the Draw? Cities Divided on Whether Rapid Transit Is Spurring Growth in Downtown Cores," *Waterloo Region Record*, July 23, 2012, First edition, sec. News.

[599] Tom Galloway, interview by author, Waterloo, ON.

[600] Ibid.

[601] Ibid.

ridership and intensification along Portland's light rail transit lines than along their bus rapid transit lines. "They could show us and demonstrate with actual experience. It wasn't theory," he explains. And the trip gave councillors a chance to see a system that had weathered opposition and been successful. He had a chance to speak with individuals who had been vocal opponents of the Portland LRT, and now were strong supporters. "These were really confidence builders, in that, although you had to get over the hump … at the end of the day, it was a really good thing for intensification."[602]

Despite his enthusiasm for the project and his commitment to intensification, Galloway ran on reviewing it in the 2010 election. While pledging to support the project "if the first phase can be made affordable now that we know the senior governments commitments,"[603] he also suggested, "We need to revisit the current plan and look at options involving staging the system and/or looking at rapid buses."[604]

I ask him about his commitment to revisit the project in the 2010 election. "It was mostly political," he says bluntly, with some humour. "I think, in the 2010 election, the safest position you could take is to be pro rapid transit …. What technology at what cost? You know. There was still a lot to decide," he explains. "I can remember wordsmithing my brochure, and my web site, to make it very clear I was in support of rapid transit, but you know, it's got to be at an affordable cost, and … all that good political stuff," he says.[605]

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[602] Ibid.

[603] "TriTAG Candidate Questionnaire 2010."

[604] Outhit, "Candidates Beat up on Transit Plan."

[605] Tom Galloway, interview by author, Waterloo, ON.

Galloway would run on LRT again in 2014.[606] "We fought ostensibly two elections on rapid transit," he tells me. Some thought that the councillors who supported the project would be thrown out of office at election time, as had happened to the entire City of Waterloo council years ago over a financial disaster from building the RIM Park recreation complex. "And for all the consternation and the worry that we all had that we're all getting kicked out, … we actually did better than we did in the previous elections."[607]

Galloway sees this as a feature of municipal politics. "It really reinforces the notion that at the local level, if people are getting the garbage picked up and their roads plowed and they're generally happy about municipal services, they go along with their council on some of this stuff. They don't throw them out," he tells me. "In municipal politics, where we don't have parties and ideologies per say, generally they're satisfied if those basic things are getting done. Notwithstanding that we still worry about it," he confides. "Until the returns came in in 2010, I had no idea what was going to happen."[608]

In the rehashing of the project that came after the 2010 election, Galloway had to rely on his colleagues to keep the project going when he couldn't. He had declared a pecuniary interest in 2009 over the question of the route only, based on his employment at the University of Waterloo.[609] He didn't vote on the project at all the second time,[610] for the same reason. The two

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[606] "Veteran Galloway Seeks Another Regional Term," *Waterloo Region Record*, August 30, 2014, First edition, sec. Local.

[607] Tom Galloway, interview by author, Waterloo, ON.

[608] Ibid.

[609] Region of Waterloo, "Regional Council Minutes: Wednesday, June 24, 2009."

[610] Region of Waterloo, "Regional Council Minutes: Wednesday, June 15, 2011," June 15, 2011, http://regionofwaterloo.ca/en/regionalGovernment/resources/CM2011-0615.pdf.

universities, Waterloo and Wilfrid Laurier, wanted two different routes that would stop at their respective campuses. "The university's been very good to me over the years … and I did not want to embarrass them by having somebody pick up on the fact that, well, here's a UW employee supporting the UW route," he tells me.[611] As soon as the decision was made as to where the stops would be, Galloway returned, armed with a supporting legal opinion.[612]

Fortunately, Galloway was pleased that council, by and large, came together to support the project. "I thought it would be easy for some people to take a contrary view and go with a bus option versus the light rail, which was significantly more expensive."[613]

As former budget chair, Galloway knows it's hard to put the cost of LRT in context for the public. As he noted years ago,[614] the Region is spending more on upgrades to a sewage treatment plant than they are on LRT, but the public doesn't seem to care. "Not a whimper. Not a delegation. Nobody complaining about anything," he says. "When they turn on the tap, they want water to come out, and they want the water to be quality water," he explains. "But when it comes to a transit project, because people don't all use transit, and the intuitive benefit of this project is not apparent …. If they're going to be upset about something, it's going to be that."[615]

His understanding of issues like intensification has changed a lot since he was first elected decades ago. "I think, as an average citizen, you don't give a lot of thought necessarily to growth in the community. You buy your new suburban house, and then you complain about the

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[611] Tom Galloway, interview by author, Waterloo, ON.

[612] Barrick, "Another 11 to Be Hired for Light Rail Transit."

[613] Tom Galloway, interview by author, Waterloo, ON.

[614] Jeff Outhit, "Sewage Plan to Cost $250M; Funds Would Complete Kitchener Upgrade Underway since 2009," *Waterloo Region Record*, September 1, 2012, First edition, sec. LOCAL.

[615] Tom Galloway, interview by author, Waterloo, ON.

next subdivision," he explains. "But being on council, then you start understanding the costs of growth and putting in all these services, what it does to congestion, and you start seeing the benefits of intensification, and long-term environmental impacts," he says. "These things aren't intuitive to the average person."[616]

It certainly wasn't growth management that brought Galloway into politics. "I was upset with a decision that the school board had made on semestering … and got involved in a bit of an attempt to reverse that decision," he tells me. "It was already made, and there was no chance of reversing it. And five years later I probably agreed with it."[617] But the issue brought him into politics; he joined the local Catholic school board in 1988.[618]

The school board was his first introduction to growth management issues. "You have to start thinking about, you know, another subdivision, another subdivision, another subdivision over here. We need a school site over here," he tells me. But the more significant push came when Galloway joined Kitchener City Council in 1991. "I cut my teeth, so to speak, on major planning issues on the Deer Ridge subdivision. Where we had competing interests, we had developers in the middle, we had competing neighborhood interests on either side of all that vacant land out there," he explains. "And I was right in the middle of it. Meetings after meetings after meetings with this neighbourhood group, that neighbourhood group, trying to get them to come together. Trying to get the developer to change some of their objectives." Relations were not always smooth with the developers. One developer was particularly adversarial. "He kicked

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[616] Ibid.

[617] Ibid.

[618] "Tom Galloway, 59."

me out of a couple of meetings. 'You're not invited.' The residents had invited me," Galloway says.[619]

It would be far from the last time Galloway would have to wrestle with developers. He tells me he supported the decision to appeal the OMB ruling. "Their [land budget] calculation was … so contrived, and so pro-development. And it was unimaginable that the OMB went along with it," he says. "It should never have happened. And it should never have taken the effort and the cost and resources to do it. But I'm certainly glad that we did."[620]

He was generally quite satisfied with the settlement. "We held our nose on bringing in the lands on the corner of Benjamin and Weber Street," he tells me, speaking of the farm field on the township side of the Woolwich/Waterloo border, near the iconic St. Jacobs Farmers' Market. "That was just a money grab. But they weren't going away without getting something. So we had to toss them a bone," he says. Unpleasant points of compromise led to some disagreement behind the scenes. "There were people who didn't want to give that away," Galloway confides. "But then you have to argue with them, 'but you get the rest of the pie.'" The compromise was worth it. "It wasn't a perfect solution by any means," he says. "But it was a much, much, much better solution than what the OMB had decided."[621]

While the issue is decided for now, Galloway says people will challenge the rural protections in the future, particularly in southwest Kitchener. "There are developers who own properties outside that line, and you know that someday they're going to take another run at it." But in the meantime, growth there has been given constraints and direction. "Without it, it would

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[619] Ibid.

[620] Ibid.

[621] Ibid.

be like the Wild West, almost…. It provides a stop subject to a future council, subject to future

policies and regulations that may or may not change that would favour development again."[622]

Galloway thinks there's a connection between the Region's success on LRT and the

official plan and the move to separated councils in 2000. "Would we have gotten to a light rail or

… a Regional Growth Management Strategy with a non-separated council?" he reflects. "It's

hypothetical," he says. "I don't know. I'm just not sure it would've been prioritized as much."[623]

Galloway is one of the councillors who should know. He served on Kitchener Council

until the councils were separated, having been one of Kitchener's regional councillors for six

years.[624] He decided to run for the newly separated regional council in 2000 and won.[625]

Galloway supported the move to separated councils at the time,[626] as he does today. "The

eight members of council who are directly elected are much less parochial than we were. And I

can say we, because I've done both," he tells me. "I had as regional a mind as anybody on that

council at that time. But your first call was still to your city." Galloway says about 80% of the

councillors' time was spent on their own municipalities, leaving only 20% for the region. "It was

second fiddle," he says. "When it comes to the bigger stuff, I don't see borders. And when

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[622] Ibid.

[623] Ibid.

[624] Jeff Outhit, "Incumbents Have Edge in Kitchener; There Are Four Spots for Regional Council, but Hopefuls Have to Hustle to Get One," *Kitchener-Waterloo Record*, November 8, 2003, Final edition, sec. Local.

[625] "Father-Son Team Win Hard-Fought Campaigns," *Kitchener-Waterloo Record*, November 14, 2000, Final edition, sec. Local.

[626] Joel Rubinoff, "Kitchener Changes Position, Supports Separate Councils," *Kitchener-Waterloo Record*, June 22, 1999, Cambridge edition, sec. Local; Thompson, "Region Votes to Reinvent Itself; Council to Be Separate from Municipalities."

you're sitting on city council, and being on regional council, those borders become so much more important."[627]

Still, Galloway would have preferred a move to a single-tier city. He voted with all of his Kitchener colleagues against the final phase of the two-tier rationalization in 2000, and ran his region campaign on a platform that featured the super-city.[628]

He still feels the same way. "In an ideal world … I would have one city, and I'd call it Waterloo" after the region and the county, he tells me. "That's the brand." He doesn't think it would save money, particularly. But he thinks it would allow for better planning. "We do planning by assessment, still," he says. "You turn the other way because, well, they need a little piece of that pie, too. You don't use your infrastructure to the best avail." He thinks this kind of competition still spills over to frustrate region-wide efforts to attract businesses, even with the recent creation of the Waterloo Region Economic Development Corporation.[629]

Galloway is conscious of the divisiveness of the amalgamation issue, pointing to the example of the continued fractures between Galt, Preston, and Hespeler in Cambridge. Yet, based on the economic development that the city has enabled, "becoming Cambridge was one of the best things that ever happened to them," he says. "As long as you have a strategy to maintain strong neighborhoods and identities, I think you can allay that concern to a large extent."[630]

Still, this divisiveness is more than enough to keep Galloway away from the single-tier option, for now. He thinks it won't happen unless the provincial government forces it. "I don't

[627] "Tom Galloway, 59."

[628] Rubinoff, "Region Reform Falls Apart; Councillors Agree to Defer All Talks until after November Elections"; "18 Kitchener Candidates Seek Four Regional Council Seats."

[629] Tom Galloway, interview by author, Waterloo, ON.

[630] Ibid.

think we should pursue it, unless the province had some appetite for it," he says. "They've made it perfectly clear they don't. So don't even utter the word, you know? Because it just creates problems."[631]

For now, as Planning and Works chair, Galloway has plenty to do to make sure that the LRT project is moving forward. There's already some concern that the trains, to be built by Bombardier, may not arrive as scheduled.[632] But despite its challenges, Galloway seems to still be enjoying his 27 years and counting in politics. "I don't think you do it for the money. I don't think you do it for the glory. It's a bug, and it gets in your blood," he says. It's a bug his children have caught, despite his initial hesitation at the idea: two of them in a row have succeeded him in his old Kitchener Council seat since 2000.[633]

"I see it as community service, and as a way I can contribute. And then how the hell do you get out of it?" he laughs. "At re-election I come along and say, oh jeez, I don't want to do this anymore. But then… oh, no. I want to be there for the ribbon cutting."[634]

Sean Strickland

I sit down with Sean Strickland in an empty board room near the councillors' offices at Regional Administrative Headquarters. Now in his mid-50s,[635] Strickland was born in Hamilton,

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[631] Ibid.

[632] CTV Kitchener, "Ion Vehicles Expected to Arrive Locally in Late 2016," September 22, 2015, http://kitchener.ctvnews.ca/ion-vehicles-expected-to-arrive-locally-in-late-2016-1.2576034.

[633] Jeff Outhit, "Galloways Share Love of Hockey and Politics," *Kitchener-Waterloo Record*, November 15, 2000, Final edition, sec. Local; "Another Galloway Running in Ward 4," *Kitchener-Waterloo Record*, September 27, 2006, Final edition, sec. Local.

[634] Tom Galloway, interview by author, Waterloo, ON.

Ontario, but has lived in the region since he was a child.[636] During all his previous terms[637] on the separated regional council, Strickland served as the chair of the Community Services Committee.[638] The posting made some sense; when he was first elected, he was the executive director of the Food Bank of Waterloo Region.[639] This term, when Tom Galloway moved to the Planning and Works Committee, Strickland took over as chair of Administration and Finance.[640]

Strickland sees growth management as an example of the rightful role of the government in the market. "I believe fundamentally that governments can be positive actors in the economy," he says. "Governments need to have a role in shaping their communities, and … capitalism, if left unchecked, ends up consuming itself."[641]

For Strickland, avoiding unmanaged growth like they've had in Mississauga is a priority. Unbridled urban expansion would continue to eat up farmland. "One of the beauties of our community, that I've always cherished since I've been a young person – I've been here pretty well all my life – is that … the countryside is always a 10 minute drive. And that is a tremendous benefit of living in Waterloo Region. And I think that it's something that I'd like to do whatever

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[635] Philip Jalsevac, "Seven Candidates Battle for Three at-Large Seats," *Kitchener-Waterloo Record*, November 5, 1997, Final edition, sec. Local.

[636] Sean Strickland, interview by author, Kitchener, ON.

[637] Strickland didn't run for the 2003 to 2006 council term, as he ran against Progressive Conservative incumbent Elizabeth Witmer in the 2003 provincial election. Carol Goodwin, "Cheers Greet Defeated Liberal," *Kitchener-Waterloo Record*, October 3, 2003, Final edition, sec. Local.

[638] Region of Waterloo, "Meet Sean Strickland," June 16, 2016, http://www.regionofwaterloo.ca/en/regionalGovernment/seanstrickland.asp.

[639] Ibid.

[640] Desmond, "Region OK's High-Profile Committee Chair Posts."

[641] Sean Strickland, interview by author, Kitchener, ON.

I can to maintain." Strickland thinks politicians in the area have generally shared that goal. Going back to Waterloo County, it "has always been a value of elected officials, still to this day I think, of maintaining that urban and rural harmony."[642]

Strickland is conscious of the fact that developers don't have an incentive to preserve a broader community vision. "Developers are interested in what the yield is [that] they can get off of a hectare or an acre of land, and not so much concerned about long-term community benefits or detriments," he explains. If the development industry was left to its own devices, he tells me, they'd continue with the past model that just keeps paving over farmland. "And then you're left with this big sprawling community without a heart," he summarizes. Municipalities have to "work with the development industry, to clearly articulate what your goals are for the community and how you can achieve that together," he says. "Sometimes that results in conflict."[643]

From Strickland's perspective, politicians play an important role in separating the big picture issues from the detailed disagreements between the industry and regional staff. It was the same with the Regional Official Plan. He supported the appeal. "The development industry challenged our formula," he explains. "And if their challenge of our formula succeeded, then the main objectives of our official plan, to limit urban sprawl and to focus on intensification, would have been jeopardized." There were disagreements among councillors about a few of the specifics, including a fairly public one over whether Kitchener's southwest lands would be slated for development. "But mostly there was consensus to maintain the overall objectives of our official plan," he explains.[644]

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[642] Ibid.

[643] Ibid.

[644] Ibid.

Given the complexity of the interests at play, a combined settlement was necessary. "The nature of the beast is that ultimately you have to make a compromise," he explains. But settling individually with each appellant would have meant compromising the goals of the plan. "When you have a vision for your community, you have to continue to work toward that vision, [and] not get too bogged down in some of the details. Leave that to staff," he says. But "you have to recognize that, to balance competing interests, sometimes you have to make a deal. Otherwise you can't move the community forward. And that's the art of being a politician."[645]

In dealing with growth management questions, Strickland tells me he mostly hears from those who are involved with a particular site. "You hear from people who are directly affected, and money's involved," he says. "If you have a farm property… worth, you know, a million bucks, but if it gets included in a development proposal, now it's worth five million? We're going to hear from those people." If he hears from members of the public, it's "the public defined through an interest group" of environmentalists or landowners. He doesn't hear from the general public. "They have an expectation, I think, that council does the right thing, and tries to find the right balance."[646]

I wonder if finding that balance is hard. "I won't say it's easy," he says. "But I'm fine to say, 'No, that's not going to work. I know that that may not suit your private interest, but public interest trumps your private interest.' And I've said that to people. They don't like it. But they understand it and deal with it and move on," he explains. "It's not as difficult for me to deal with those questions as it was earlier in my career, where it was a little bit of a struggle," he says.

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[645] Ibid.

[646] Ibid.

"When you're first elected … you really want to please people, and then after a while, you begin to realize that you can't please everybody all the time."[647]

He puts public opinion on the LRT into similar perspective. "In municipal politics, every decision you're going to make, you're going to annoy somebody," he tells me. He highlights that those who supported the project were re-elected in both 2010 and 2014. "There's a strong, vocal minority who were against the LRT," he says. "And if you didn't have the backbone to stand up against that strong vocal minority, respectfully, with cogent arguments, then you would have been swayed, and in my view made the wrong decision for the community."[648]

Strickland's sense of the right decision on LRT strengthened over time. He had expressed enthusiasm in the early days of the project.[649] But "initially, I was likely lukewarm," he confides. "Over time, it became stronger as I began to see more and more of the benefits, and learn more about the project." Strickland's education included one of those trips to Portland to learn about the system in 2007.[650]

While Strickland has continued to defend the project with an eye toward those community goals, he did pull back somewhat during the 2010 election. When the provincial capital funding was less than expected, he encouraged patience.[651] But when the federal funding

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[647] Ibid.

[648] Ibid.

[649] Outhit, "Region Fast-Tracks Streetcar Proposal; Huge Project Including Convention Centre Dependent on Federal Funds."

[650] "Regional Councillors 'Frugal,'" *Waterloo Region Record*, March 24, 2008, Final edition, sec. Local.

[651] Outhit, "Cheaper Buses Plan Back in Spotlight."

announcement came in, he said, "It's too much to ask of the local taxpayer."[652] During the 2010

election, his comments focused on supporting the project as long as it was affordable.[653]

"Preliminary plans have to be adjusted due to less money from federal and provincial

governments than expected," he said.[654]

After the election, he worked on it. He pushed for Infrastructure Ontario to help the

Region arrange a public private partnership to deliver the project,[655] and facilitated a meeting

with the minister of infrastructure about it.[656] When it comes to the financial effects of the

design, build, finance, operate, and maintain (DBFOM) arrangement with the Grandlinq

consortium, he tells me, "We'll know more in the next two years once the project's completed."

But in his view, the 30-year arrangement for financing and the penalties for delay gave the

Region "more certainty," and long-term responsibility for maintenance gives Grandlinq an

incentive to build quality infrastructure. "The challenge with municipalities is that we have

elastic demand for services, but inelastic revenue generating tools," he explains. Since property

tax doesn't reflect "a person's ability to pay … municipalities need more revenue generating

tools," and "to be innovative" on big infrastructure projects, including approaches like DBFOM,

he says.[657]

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[652] Outhit, "Feds Give Transit Plan $265M Total Funding Is Still $235M Short of the $800M Projected for a System with Trains."

[653] Outhit, "Candidates Beat up on Transit Plan"; "TriTAG Candidate Questionnaire 2010."

[654] "TriTAG Candidate Questionnaire 2010."

[655] Outhit, "Councillors Push Rail Rethink; Region Will Consider Route and Financial Suggestions before June 15 Vote on Transit Plan."

[656] Sean Strickland, interview by author, Kitchener, ON.

[657] Ibid.

But beyond sorting out the money, Strickland thinks the review served a broader purpose. "No one was paying attention" during the initial approval, he tells me. After the public started paying attention, he thought it should be examined again. "I think that was an excellent public exercise," he says. "We got the public engaged, and so then when we made a decision, we knew that it wasn't some kind of sleepy decision where no one was paying attention. And I think that's good governance."[658]

Strickland's interest in good governance and political service had family origins. "I had a good role model in my dad," he says. His father was a Kitchener Ward 10 councillor[659] and former union vice-president.[660] "Coming from a family of community service … I always had this strong sense of helping community. And felt that I could do that from an elected position, as well."[661]

Strickland was elected to the school board in 1994,[662] representing Waterloo. But he had run three times since the mid-1980s, when he was living in Kitchener, in Kitchener Council ward races.[663] In 1997, he ran for a seat on Waterloo City Council and regional council under the old

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[658] Ibid.

[659] Ibid.

[660] Rose Simone, "Local Politician Gets Top Construction Job," *Waterloo Region Record*, January 14, 2009, Final edition, sec. Business.

[661] Sean Strickland, interview by author, Kitchener, ON.

[662] Liz Monteiro and Luisa D'Amato, "Two Most Controversial Trustees Lose Vote," *Kitchener-Waterloo Record*, November 15, 1994, Final edition, sec. Local.

[663] Greg Crone, "Three Hopefuls off and Running in Kitchener Council Byelection," *Kitchener-Waterloo Record*, October 23, 1990, City edition, sec. Local; Greg Crone, "Rockway Race Looks like Rerun," *Kitchener-Waterloo Record*, November 8, 1991, Final edition, sec. Front.

double-direct system[664] and won. And when the councils separated in 2000, he was elected to regional council.[665]

Having seen both city and regional council, Strickland thinks the regional government system has provided some big-picture vision that wouldn't be possible at the area municipalities, particularly on growth management. "I think sometimes, at the local level, they experience a lot more pressure," he tells me. "Because the issues are local. And … the development industry and others can really focus their attention on putting pressure on a council of a local area," he explains. The bigger picture at the Region insulates council somewhat from that pressure, he suggests. "It allows us more latitude to make decisions where we can say no to an area, because by saying no to an area, we're saying yes to a bigger plan."[666]

Strickland sees the value of this differentiation. He voted for separated councils back in 1999.[667] Today, he tells me that separated councils were the "best thing that ever happened to the Region." Before the separation, regional councillors couldn't pay enough attention to regional issues. "I had a fulltime job, I was a regional councillor, and I was a city councillor," he says. "The regional issues got short shrift. And they were really the big policy issues." He also saw some disagreements between regional and area municipal staff getting channeled through the regional councillors, as well. "I think that unhealthy tension over the years, since we've separated, has become more healthy."[668]

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[664] Jalsevac, "Seven Candidates Battle for Three at-Large Seats."

[665] Burtt and Caldwell, "Amalgamation Will Be Hot Topic for Regional Council."

[666] Sean Strickland, interview by author, Kitchener, ON.

[667] Thompson, "Region Votes to Reinvent Itself; Council to Be Separate from Municipalities."

[668] Sean Strickland, interview by author, Kitchener, ON.

Still, the 1990s reforms weren't enough for Strickland. He ended up joining his colleagues south of the border in Kitchener to defeat the final phase of the two-tier rationalization proposal, opposing his local council's position.[669] "I supported amalgamation," he tells me today. "I still support amalgamation."[670]

Strickland has long thought that the two-tier system causes problems for smart growth. During the creation of the RGMS, he had expressed concerns that the area municipalities had an incentive to want growth within their borders to protect their revenues, and that implementation of the RGMS would have to be undertaken by the area municipal councils on specific sites.[671]

Like Galloway, Strickland thinks a one-tier system would address some of the competition between the area municipalities in both growth planning and economic development. But he generally concludes that the two-tier arrangement hasn't really interfered with the Region's smart growth plans. "I can't say that I think our two tier structures got in the way," he tells me. "It probably took us longer to get to some places where we wanted to go, and [we] probably had some more brush fires than what we needed to deal with. But … if it was that much of a challenge, we wouldn't have achieved the consensus that we have [as] to how we shape our communities."[672]

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[669] Rubinoff, "Region Reform Falls Apart; Councillors Agree to Defer All Talks until after November Elections."

[670] Sean Strickland, interview by author, Kitchener, ON.

[671] Terry Pender, "One Government Key to Fair Growth, Councillor Says," *Kitchener-Waterloo Record*, April 27, 2001, Final edition, sec. Local; Outhit, "Co-Operation Key to Planned Growth."

[672] Sean Strickland, interview by author, Kitchener, ON.

He also doesn't think a change to the regional system will happen any time soon. "It's off the radar," he says. "We're carrying on with the status quo. And the status quo, you know, people would argue is working pretty well. And to a certain extent I would agree with that."[673]

Strickland thinks his community shows a willingness to innovate in the face of changing circumstances. "When I was growing up, people aspired to be a tire builder or work at Schneider's. All those places have changed and gone," he says. "We have this driving kind of community sense to tackle adversity and continue to build the community. Not a lot of navel gazing. Which I think has really stood our community in good stead."[674]

Jim Wideman

It's a cold, dreary morning in April, and I take the new 204 Ixpress bus to the office of the Ontario Beef Cattle Financial Protection Program, on Victoria Street in Kitchener. Now in his mid-70s,[675] Jim Wideman has been running the program, which protects cattle sellers from bankruptcies of licensed buyers, for the last 17 years.[676]

While Wideman still works for the program, he retired as a regional councillor representing Kitchener at the end of the 2014 council term.[677] His last years were busy. As chair of the Planning and Works Committee, Wideman was integrally involved in the LRT project.

Wideman served with the other committee chairs on the project's steering committee, and he led that committee following regional approval of the project in 2011[678] as its chair.[679] With

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[673] Ibid.

[674] Ibid.

[675] Paige Desmond, "Regional Coun. Jim Wideman Retiring after 25 Years," *Waterloo Region Record*, June 25, 2014, sec. News.

[676] Jim Wideman, interview by author, Kitchener, ON.

[677] Desmond, "Regional Coun. Jim Wideman Retiring after 25 Years."

nearly constant quotations from him in stories about the project, Wideman became a very visible face of the project in the 2010 to 2014 council term.

He was even more involved behind the scenes. He had to be; with the project's biggest council champion, Chair Seiling, unable to advocate for the project having declared a pecuniary interest, someone else had to step up. "It killed him, I know, to not be able to be a part of that," Wideman tells me. But in Seiling's absence, "council met one day and said, okay … Jim, you're going to be the lead on the LRT. You will be the spokesperson."[680]

Wideman's role extended well beyond being quoted in a barrage of news stories. "I was sort of the equivalent of the regional chair for about a year and a half," he explains. "And being in that role and getting to get an understanding and a feeling of working behind the scenes with councillors, sitting down with them and saying …. 'You know I want to make this happen. And what do you need to be able to come on board with this?' And you don't give away the shop," he explains. "But they have, 'Well, I'd like this tweaked or this tweaked,' and so on. And so you work the compromise," he says. "There was a few people whose vote I knew I wasn't going to get."[681]

So Wideman found himself with the job of getting and keeping other councillors on board with the project. As for his own views on LRT, Wideman expressed support for the project

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[678] Ibid.

[679] Paige Desmond, "Aissa Wants Judicial Review of LRT; Region to Continue with Project Approvals despite Threats of More Court Proceedings," *Waterloo Region Record*, May 7, 2014, First edition, sec. Local.

[680] Jim Wideman, interview by author, Kitchener, ON.

[681] Ibid.

as early as 2003.[682] "I believed from the very early days of when [former CAO] Gerry

Thompson was still here that, yes, this is a project that is right," he tells me.[683] His support for

the project has long centred on the need for intensification in core areas.[684] Like the other chairs,

Wideman joined one of the councillor trips to Portland to see their system.[685] And while he's

been supportive of transit investment for years, he has emphasized that intensification is the first

goal of LRT and transportation is the second.[686]

Wideman got plenty of practice explaining the project's value to other people. He

campaigned in favour of rapid transit in 2006.[687] But after the swelling backlash leading up to

the 2010 election, the choice to keep supporting the project was a more difficult one. "I think my

election brochures will confirm this: I never, ever was detracted from us doing the LRT. I

agonized over [it], just from a political perspective, because I wanted to stay on council. Do I say

that I'm not supportive anymore? I think a few councillors did. To their chagrin. But I did not do

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[682] Jeff Outhit, "Rail Link 'Just Not Worth the Money'; $260M Transit Plan Won't Earn Its Keep,

Candidates Say," *Kitchener-Waterloo Record*, October 28, 2003, Final edition, sec. Local.

[683] Jim Wideman, interview by author, Kitchener, ON.

[684] Jeff Outhit, "Regional Council Wants in on Land Development; Public Input to Be Sought on Plan to

Use Public Funds on Development," *Kitchener-Waterloo Record*, December 15, 2007, Final edition, sec. Local;

Outhit, "Cambridge Transit Gets Short Shrift, Mayor Says"; Jim Wideman, "A New, Rapid Transit System Is the

Right Choice for Waterloo Region," *Waterloo Region Record*, June 23, 2009, Final edition, sec. Insight.

[685] Jim Wideman, interview by author, Kitchener, ON.

[686] Paige Desmond, "A Sure Sign LRT Is on Its Way; Planners Hope Visibility of Project Will Encourage

Development along the Region's Transit Corridor," *Waterloo Region Record*, June 11, 2014, First edition, sec.

Local.

[687] "Wideman Hopes to Stay as Regional Representative," *Kitchener-Waterloo Record*, July 29, 2006, Final

edition, sec. Local.

that," he imparts. Like Strickland, his election comments focused on the affordability of the

project, expressing openness to both a changed LRT project or bus rapid transit.[688] "What I did

say, though, is that the project has to be affordable, I believe were the words that I used. And I

worked aggressively behind the scenes in making that happen."[689]

Wideman said at the time that he heard more support for the project than opposition when

he was knocking on doors in 2010.[690] "I ran into some that were vociferously opposed to it," he

recalls. "And then I met others who said, 'Oh my gosh, I hadn't heard.' And welcomed me with

open arms."[691]

Transit can be a hard sell. "Likely one of the most misunderstood aspects of what we do

at regional council is public transportation," Wideman says. A lot of the opposition to LRT is

from folks he calls the "Westmount crowd," after the wealthy inner suburb near the golf course.

They're people "who have two or three cars. Say, 'We'll never use it. And all you're doing is

subsidizing the poor people,'" he explains.[692]

During the 2010 election, Wideman tells me he got a call from a constituent from such a

neighbourhood, who owned three cars. "He said, 'Jim, I've supported you every year.' He said,

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[688] Outhit, "Cheaper Buses Plan Back in Spotlight"; Outhit, "Feds Give Transit Plan $265M Total Funding Is Still $235M Short of the $800M Projected for a System with Trains"; Outhit, "Candidates Beat up on Transit Plan."

[689] Jim Wideman, interview by author, Kitchener, ON.

[690] Outhit, "Buses Are Back on the Table; Regional Council Worries Cost of Light-Rail Plan Will Be Prohibitive."

[691] Jim Wideman, interview by author, Kitchener, ON.

[692] Ibid.

'Can't support you this year,'" Wideman recalls. The caller explained that LRT was unaffordable and "'we can't afford to spend that much money subsidizing people who can't afford a car.'"[693]

The caller was genuinely surprised when Wideman told him about how much non-drivers subsidize his use of a car. As he recalls responding,

> 'We spend over $25 million a year, just in upgrading and sustaining our roads and bridges. That's not new building. That's maintenance. That comes out of our general tax pot. That everybody in the region pays into, including the people that are earning $30,000 and $40,000 a year, who can't afford a car, or maybe do a carshare, or do GRT and do LRT. And they're paying into that pot so that you and I can drive our cars.' I said, 'We subsidize car drivers way more than we subsidize people who ride public transit. That's simply a fact.' And he said, 'Oh my god.' He said, 'Nobody's ever told me that before.'[694]

The caller said he'd be voting for Wideman. "I had never sort of put it that plainly to somebody," he tells me.[695]

Still, Wideman's sustained advocacy for the project doesn't mean that he was always certain. "There were some moments as we were going through the process that I had doubts," he confides. "Other than my wife, I don't think I've never told anybody what I just said to you. But I did."[696] His doubts centered on the cost of the project, particularly after the federal funding announcement was substantially less than the minimum $300 million that Wideman had hoped for to blunt the impact of the provincial shortfall.[697]

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[693] Ibid.

[694] Ibid.

[695] Ibid.

[696] Ibid.

[697] Outhit, "Cheaper Buses Plan Back in Spotlight"; Outhit, "Feds Give Transit Plan $265M Total Funding Is Still $235M Short of the $800M Projected for a System with Trains"; Jim Wideman, interview by author, Kitchener, ON.

"We went back to the table, reworked the numbers, and were able to get that sorted out," Wideman tells me, of efforts to save the project despite the high local contribution required. At council, he advanced a proposal to reduce the property tax impact by allocating recent savings from social service uploading to the province and elimination of the debt from building two regional offices, and allocate that toward LRT and Grand River Transit improvements. The result was a 7% tax increase spread over 7 years.[698] Between his motion and Chair Strickland's, which introduced the public private partnership, Wideman and his colleagues could show that they had made the project more affordable than the 9% increase in one year that had been expected before the election.[699] The project could move forward.

Wideman was the face of the LRT project for so many years, and his support was always framed as being about intensification and growth management. Yet while he consistently chose to defend the LRT project for growth management purposes, he didn't make the same choice to defend the Regional Official Plan.

Wideman didn't want to appeal the OMB decision. "I was fundamentally not surprised by OMB's decision, nor was I actually disappointed by it," he says. "I was very much of two minds about that. Because while I have been a very strong proponent of preserving our agricultural land, I also recognize the competing interest and the competing need for us to supply housing for an ever-expanding population."[700]

While Wideman supports intensification, he thinks we need to be careful that core areas don't get too dense. He wants to make sure "we don't create a situation in the downtown cores

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[698] Region of Waterloo, "Regional Council Minutes: Wednesday, June 15, 2011," June 15, 2011.

[699] See Sean Strickland, "A Clear Conscience," *Waterloo Region Record*, October 24, 2014, First edition, sec. Editorial.

[700] Jim Wideman, interview by author, Kitchener, ON.

where you have people stacked on top of each other. I think you can do that [intensification] and do it well, but we need to be careful." More significantly, Wideman wasn't convinced by regional staff's position on trends away from aging in place. "I'm in that category, because of my age," he tells me. He knocked on doors in four regional council elections, he explains, and met retired people in their 60s who have lived in their homes for 40 years. "And guess what? They don't want to move into a small condo in downtown. They want to stay in their house," he explains. "So we can't make the assumption that everybody, when they turn 65 or 60, want to sell their home in the burbs and move downtown."[701]

Back when the OMB ruling was released, he said much the same thing. "There is still a lot of demand for green field development where people want to stay in their homes longer, and they are not looking to move into a condo in downtown Kitchener or Waterloo or Cambridge," he told the paper. "I think what this does is offers people who live here, and who are going to come here, it offers them choice."[702]

He tells me he doesn't think the Region's initial policy found the right balance between leading change and respecting what people want. "I think it's important for politicians to respect the wishes of their constituents," he explains. "You certainly lead by driving some change. And we did that with the LRT. We did that with putting boundaries around the region in terms of development. So we're leading by driving that change. However, there's also a limit."[703]

For Wideman, a better balance is building single-detached homes on smaller lots. If people want kids, they "still want that little patch of green space and the picket fence," but "it'll

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[701] Ibid.

[702] Pender, "Ruling Squashes Cap on Sprawl."

[703] Jim Wideman, interview by author, Kitchener, ON.

be on a smaller footprint than the first house I built in the sixties," he describes. "And I think that's great."[704]

His role as Planning and Works chair meant that he was heavily involved in the ongoing appeal. "Way more involved than many people realize," he says. "Behind the scenes, working with staff. And a lot of things that I did … never came into the public view because it was private discussions with staff around some of the issues," he says.[705]

"When the decision first came down, I met with the chair and the CAO of the Region, and [Planning Commissioner] Rob Horne. And I said, 'Quite frankly, I don't think we should be fighting this. And the land that was coming in was land that I always believed should, in fact, come in.'" He particularly thought that the lands in southwest Kitchener, which had been the subject of so much debate at council during the original ROP process, were the right ones to be included.[706] This is consistent with his voting record on the ROP: in 2009, he voted to defer introduction of the Regional Recharge Area and Protected Countryside designations in southwest Kitchener, and himself introduced a successful motion to delay introduction of the Protected Countryside across the Region to allow more consultation with landowners first.[707] In 2010, he voted against the motions that eventually asked the province to include southwest Kitchener in both the Regional Recharge Area and the Protected Countryside, citing concerns about the process.[708]

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[704] Ibid.

[705] Ibid.

[706] Ibid.

[707] Region of Waterloo, "Regional Council Minutes: Tuesday, June 16, 2009."

[708] Region of Waterloo, "Regional Council Minutes: Wednesday, June 30, 2010."

Beyond supporting development of the lands that would be included under the OMB ruling, Wideman didn't think they would be able to reverse the OMB decision, and thought they would spend a lot of money fighting simply to get to an expansion amount somewhere between the developers' number and the Region's number.[709]

It might seem surprising that Wideman wants more rural lands to be opened to development, given his background. Though he represented Kitchener, where he now lives, on regional council, Wideman has more sustained and varied experience with the agricultural industry than any of his colleagues. He grew up on a farm in Wellesley Township as one of eight children, and went to work at a young age at Wallenstein Feed and Supply.[710] After going back to school, he became one of the original owners and managers of the St. Jacobs Farmers' Market[711] and the Ontario Livestock Exchange on the same site. In 1979, he designed software for a real-time auction market for cattle that wouldn't require the cattle or the buyers to be physically present, a business that took him around the world. "I was actually the first Ebay, and just didn't realize what I had," he tells me, of his product that so significantly preceded the digital age. "I should have commercialized it."[712]

But Wideman's detailed involvement with agriculture gives him a perspective on preserving farmland that is less aspirational and more practical. "I recognize the importance of the preservation of agricultural land," he says. But his belief in preserving farmland in Waterloo Region is about its unusually high quality. "We're sitting on the prime agricultural land here."

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[709] Jim Wideman, interview by author, Kitchener, ON.

[710] Ibid.

[711] Paige Desmond and Brent Davis, "St. Jacobs Market Destroyed; Blaze Displaces 60 Vendors, Causes $2 Million in Damage," *Waterloo Region Record*, September 3, 2013, First edition, sec. NEWS.

[712] Jim Wideman, interview by author, Kitchener, ON.

For Wideman, food production is about much more than hectares of land. "I know, because I've been in agriculture all my life, [that] we haven't begun to scratch the surface of the amount of food that we can produce," he tells me. Agricultural production is limited by economics, he explains, not by the amount of land available. "You've got those people who are: 'Save every acre of farmland at all cost.' And I'm not there," he says. "My rationale for it is fact based."[713]

Despite his reluctance to challenge the OMB decision, Wideman tells me he voted in favour of the appeal during that crucial in camera meeting. "But I had a caveat," he explains. "There was good support" for the appeal, he says, but council insisted that the region had to negotiate, as well. "From the very beginning, [during] in camera sessions, certainly the direction to negotiate was very strong."[714]

Wideman thinks it took too long to get to a settlement, but the file was complex. "So many different players, so many different interests," he says. And while he had retired from council by the time the settlement was reached, he knew that it came close to falling apart at the last minute. "One of the major developers was not a part of the process," he explains, and that developer wanted their lands included in the expansion. "I was off council by that time. But they did actually make a couple of phone calls to me and I said, look it. I kind of told you, early on, you should be a part of the process."[715]

But it got resolved. With the final settlement, Wideman was pleased. "We didn't want our process thrown out," like a "baby with the bathwater kind of analogy. Because we still believed

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[713] Ibid.

[714] Ibid.

[715] Ibid.

that that was fundamentally right," he says. "I think where we erred was that we just didn't have the right inputs into that process." The settlement was "sort of the win-win for both of us."[716]

In speaking about the Regional Official Plan and the settlement, Wideman distinguishes very clearly between permanent protections, like the Environmentally Sensitive Landscapes for which he fought, and the long-term Countryside Line. "I was a very strong proponent of the ESLs, the environmentally sensitive landscapes, and fought really hard for that. And those, to me, are sacrosanct. The Countryside Line I never believed was sacrosanct. It was not immutable," he says. For him, the Countryside Line is about directing growth, not stopping it. "But by putting it there, we would prevent ourselves becoming another Mississauga. Where without it, you would start to have rampant movement of development in all different directions."[717]

Wideman tells me he first started thinking about growth management on Wellesley Township Council, which he joined in 1986, dealing with a proposal to convert a corn field into a subdivision.[718] He was later elected to the public school board in 1991.[719] I ask him whether his views on growth management have changed during his long tenure in office. "When I first got into politics, I likely wouldn't have dreamt the day where I would fight as hard as I did for the ESLs," he says. "That was a litmus test for me as chair of the Planning and Works. I sort of grew up under the fire of that one." Wideman had friends who were landowners whose properties were to be protected, and their properties would lose value if they couldn't be sold to developers. "Those were tough conversations. Very, very tough conversations. We came out of the other end

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[716] Ibid.

[717] Ibid.

[718] Ibid.

[719] Gallagher, "Experience Appeals to Public School Voters."

of it with our friendship intact. But it was tough." He doesn't regret it. "I believed that it was the right thing to do. And, you know, that's what leadership is about."[720]

When it comes to hearing from the public on growth management, Wideman tells me the biggest responses were on the ESLs and LRT. But for the most part, he heard from developers, farmers who owned land, and environmentalists about the Region's growth management policies.[721]

When dealing with landowners and developers, Wideman tells me he treated them like any other constituent. "I had a fundamental belief as a councillor that whether you were a single mom who had a welfare issue, or a challenged person that needed access to transportation, or whether you were a multimillion dollar developer, you were all my clients," he tells me. "And I did not have a bias against anybody in terms of sitting down with them and dealing with them, or feeling that, oh, somehow you can't sit down with the developers because they're sort of the antichrist." He tells me that they play an important role, but they need to be managed. "When you talk about developers and landowners, without them, we wouldn't have a city. We wouldn't have a region. I mean, do they need to be kept in tow? Absolutely. Are they greedy? Absolutely. But you simply meet with them in the context of understanding that the agenda they're going to push, you will always have to temper it. Because they're going to push."[722]

It's clear that Wideman's role as the chair of Planning and Works put him at the centre of a lot of these questions. I'm curious about what the committee chairs actually do at council, beyond just chairing the meetings themselves. "As chairs, we did a lot of work behind the

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[720] Jim Wideman, interview by author, Kitchener, ON.

[721] Ibid.

[722] Ibid.

scenes," he says. He tells me it began when the councils were separated, when he joined council

in 2000. "Prior to that, regional council was very much – and I say this very kindly, I don't know

the other word – very much of a dictatorship," he laughs. "Everybody sitting there, except for

Ken, their allegiance was really to their local council," he explains. "I say this respectfully: they

did their job, but the leadership was driven by Ken because the others were all busy at their own

jobs."[723]

Under the separated councils, Wideman became Planning and Works chair in 2003,[724]

along with Tom Galloway and Sean Strickland at the other two committees. Wideman had joined

regional council because he was "concerned with the budget and taxation," since there were "no

business people on council." When he began on council, he spent weeks going through past

budgets, looking for places to find some savings. "I wasn't a single issue person," he says, "but I

understood budgets." He began working with Galloway the next year on the budget, and

Strickland got involved shortly thereafter. They eventually approached Chair Seiling and

proposed meeting more regularly.[725]

"Ken very quickly realized that he had to let go of a lot of things, and allow us as chairs

of our committees to be the chairs of our committees," Wideman says. They formed a sort of

"executive committee," he says, "and made a lot of sort of decisions or recommendations to

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[723] Ibid.

[724] Region of Waterloo, "Meet Jim Wideman," November 14, 2014,

https://web.archive.org/web/20141114200010/http://www.regionofwaterloo.ca/en/regionalGovernment/jimwideman
.asp.

[725] Jim Wideman, interview by author, Kitchener, ON.

council." Most recently, "in the last term, we met at a minimum on a monthly basis, to talk about issues."[726]

The committee chairs, in Wideman's view, were empowered by the separation of the councils, which he has long supported.[727] He tells me he would prefer it if all of the regional councillors were directly elected. "It's great to have the mayors there, but let's face it, they're really busy people," he says. "They can't really dig into the job at regional council the way it needs to be done."[728]

But like his former committee chair colleagues, Wideman would prefer a single-tier system, which he ran on in his first regional council election.[729] "I've been a very, very strong supporter. Said that in, I think, every one of my election brochures." Some progress has been made despite the system. "I think we're slowly chipping away at the edge of some of the major issues that are caused by the two-tier system." Like Strickland and Wideman, he highlights economic development and the challenge of attracting business to the region when the area municipalities are fighting over it, along with water, sewer, and fire services. "We should have a one-tier. Bottom line," he states. But like his colleagues, he, too, doesn't think the system will change except by provincial fiat. "It's not going to happen unless you get a province that says thou shalt."[730]

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[726] Ibid.

[727] Outhit, "Waterloo Region."

[728] Jim Wideman, interview by author, Kitchener, ON.

[729] "18 Kitchener Candidates Seek Four Regional Council Seats"; Burtt and Caldwell, "Amalgamation Will Be Hot Topic for Regional Council."

[730] Jim Wideman, interview by author, Kitchener, ON.

For now, when it comes to growth management, "There's no question that the two-tier system is an impediment to growth," Wideman tells me, highlighting particular problems with servicing, giving the example of the East Side Lands. Bringing the planned industrial lands in Woolwich online required water and sewer servicing from neighbouring urban municipalities. In one portion, "Cambridge kept holding us up because of the cross [border] service agreements. And I was highly suspicious that the reason they held us up is because they had lots of land, serviced land, that they wanted to sell. And they didn't want this new land competing with them." The incentives for cross-border servicing don't promote cooperation, he explains, using Kitchener as an example from another part of the East Side Lands. "So you've got all this land that's going to be in Woolwich. Well, who accrues the tax benefits? It's Woolwich. But who supplies the servicing? It's Kitchener." Orderly and timely expansion struggles under that conflict.[731]

Still, under the regional system, Wideman thinks that there's a lot that works well, particularly when it comes to regional provision of services, and to regional council itself. Looking back, Wideman sees regional councillors as a big part of how all of this came to be, particularly with the LRT project. "You know, many of us on council, we knew each other, we knew each other's backgrounds," he says. "We were simply a cohesive team. And without that, a lot of what we're talking about this morning would never happen. So why did it happen here? That's a very key reason. A very key reason."[732]

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[731] Ibid.

[732] Ibid.

The Activist

Jean Haalboom

I drive down to south Kitchener to meet Jean Haalboom at a coffee shop on a warm September evening.[733] We settle into a table at the back, and the recently retired[734] Haalboom, now in her early 70s,[735] pulls out copies of her campaign brochures from her last three re-election campaigns. All of them talk about the importance of curbing urban sprawl and protecting farmland.

Haalboom served as a regional councillor for Kitchener from 2000 to 2014, after a term on Kitchener Council.[736] But she was a neighbourhood activist on growth management long before she was a politician. "Our area … was under threat from the development industry all the time," she tells me.[737] She had moved to the Upper Doon area in south Kitchener in the 1970s. "When we arrived there, it was still farmland, but Monarch Development had all the property around. And they were going to put in – and they did – 1200 homes." The plan involved making Doon Village Road, on which Haalboom lived, a collector road. "This road … was going to end

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[733] Quotations from my conversation with Haalboom are almost all from our in-person meeting. A few are from a short follow-up conversation by phone a few days later. While the two conversations are cited by their respective dates, I have integrated quotations from our phone conversation into the story of our meeting.

[734] Paige Desmond, "Political Digs, Platforms Mark First Week of Campaign," *Waterloo Region Record*, September 19, 2014, sec. News.

[735] "18 Kitchener Candidates Seek Four Regional Council Seats."

[736] Desmond, "Long-Term Municipal Politicians Wind down Final Mandates; Kitchener and Waterloo Mayors among Those Leaving."

[737] Jean Haalboom, interview by author, Kitchener, ON, October 1, 2015.

up on my porch and the neighbor's porch," she tells me. "We felt that the area had to be protected."[738]

She and her neighbours created the Society for the Protection of Upper Doon in 1984. They called it SPUD for short.[739] They pushed for the historic village, settled in 1800, to be protected as a Heritage Conservation District. They were successful by the end of the decade,[740] but the group's work continued. "So we're constantly ending up at city council about different issues with our area and the development industry," she tells me.[741] She was heavily involved in planning politics in Kitchener, writing a detailed 1994 op-ed about its official plan.[742] When she retired from teaching, she decided to run for a Kitchener council seat in the 1997 election in the newly formed ward of Doon Pioneer Park. "I thought … why should I be working with … another councillor? I think I'll just run myself. And that's what I did."[743]

Once on council, Haalboom found that her interest in planning was more focused on the big-picture regional issues than city issues.[744] So when the councils separated for the next election, she ran for one of the Kitchener regional council seats and won.[745]

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[738] Jean Haalboom, interview by author, Kitchener, ON, September 28, 2015.

[739] Ibid.

[740] Nicholas Hill, "Upper Doon: A Heritage Conservation District Plan," January 1988, https://www.kitchener.ca/en/livinginkitchener/resources/Heritage_plan_upper_doon.Pdf.

[741] Jean Haalboom, interview by author, Kitchener, ON, September 28, 2015.

[742] Jean Haalboom, "Empty Plans: Without a Political Commitment to Preserve Our Heritage, We Will Lose It," *Kitchener-Waterloo Record*, November 15, 1994, Final edition, sec. Insight.

[743] Jean Haalboom, interview by author, Kitchener, ON, September 28, 2015.

[744] Ibid.

[745] Burtt and Caldwell, "Amalgamation Will Be Hot Topic for Regional Council."

Haalboom's entry into politics gives her a different take on developers than her colleagues. In her Kitchener City Council campaign, as the Record paraphrased, "she says the city has too often bent or ignored protective policies in order to satisfy developers."[746] As she explains to me today, "There's … the pressure for development, [for] the development industry to continue to go on, and go on, and go on with housing and commercial plazas."[747]

Haalboom says developers interact with councillors often. "Somehow, socially, you run into them," she says. "They constantly are trying to socialize with the councillors." Haalboom resists these efforts. "Not me," she laughs. "I think I'm pretty deaf ears."[748] Staff members are under similar pressure, she says. "There's also the pressure on staff. And then if [the developers] feel that staff is putting up too many roadblocks, then [they] call the councillor and expect the councillor to do something."[749]

Haalboom was keen to defend the Regional Official Plan from developers. She had chaired the Public Advisory Committee that dealt with both the Regional Growth Management Strategy and rapid transit.[750] Haalboom tells me she supported the appeal of the OMB decision. "It had had how many years and how many opportunities for public input?" she says. "The developers are – they're something else. And this was a plan of the people, by the people, for the

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[746] Kevin Crowley, "Close Race Expected in New Ward 6," *Kitchener-Waterloo Record*, November 6, 1997, Final edition, sec. Local.

[747] Jean Haalboom, interview by author, Kitchener, ON, September 28, 2015.

[748] Jean Haalboom, interview by author, Kitchener, ON, October 1, 2015.

[749] Ibid.

[750] Jeff Outhit, "Public Brought on Board to Study Rail Transit; Region Appoints Advisory Committee," *Kitchener-Waterloo Record*, December 27, 2004, Final edition, sec. Local; Jean Haalboom, interview by author, Kitchener, ON, September 28, 2015.

people," she states. "It was insulting to hear what the OMB … members came up with." She believes the 80-odd hectares the Region wanted was the right amount. "[It's] important … to look at what you have and to use what you have. There was plenty of space for renewal and rejuvenating," she explains. Plus, the LRT project was based on the official plan numbers. Haalboom felt that it was important to stick to the provincial aims of halting speculation and unpredictability over farmland.[751]

She was off of council by the time the settlement was reached. She was not pleased by it. "To me, it looked like, you know, a compromise. But I just thought it was a copout," she says. "In other words … the developers got their way." She's particularly concerned about southwest Kitchener. "We're continuing to see more single family development all the way out in Kitchener's southwest. It's continuing on, and on, and on. And we're building more roads, and we don't seem to think, oh, in 15 years, how are we going to repair them?"[752]

She thinks the province should have intervened to protect its own goals and the Region's plan. "The provincial government, with this 'smart growth,' I think it's a snazzy term. A snazzy new term coined by the government to appease the environmentalists and people who believe transit is important."[753]

Yet despite her determined defence of the Regional Official Plan and its goals, Haalboom hasn't embraced some of the particulars of how it's currently being implemented. She's not convinced about changes to aging in place. She thinks that aspects of the land budget relied on

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[751] Jean Haalboom, interview by author, Kitchener, ON, September 28, 2015.

[752] Ibid.

[753] Ibid.

"rose colored glasses." She's not convinced older people will want to move into apartments. "Suddenly I'm hearing, 'I wish there were more bungalows available.'"[754]

She's also concerned about how density is being created in developing new suburbs. "The only thing we are doing, as far as interpretation of smart growth, is putting more units in the hectare. We aren't looking at the whole community planning aspect," she says. She's particularly concerned about southwest Kitchener, especially with all the land that was added for residential purposes as a result of the OMB settlement. "It really disturbs me in the south end of Kitchener, which is such beautiful farmland, and beautiful topography, that all we can do is grade across it, put in row after row after row of housing that looks like a desert because nobody has any room for any trees or anything," she explains. "What's being built now … is just horrendous. It's one little box after the next box."[755]

A lot of Haalboom's passion for growth management is about making vibrant urban spaces. Her vision for implementing density and intensification is heavily centred on approaches in Europe, where she's travelled. "You may be in this intensified or dense housing, but still you have these gardens around, so when you go out, there's lots to see," she explains. "Here, if you step out, what is there to see? Really?"[756]

Haalboom believes urban expansion should be frozen until intensification has happened along the LRT corridor, but no one seems to be talking about it, she tells me.[757] Haalboom has been one of LRT's most steadfast supporters. She unequivocally stood by the project during the controversy of the 2010 election. "Yes," she responded simply to TriTAG's question about

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[754] Ibid.

[755] Ibid.

[756] Ibid.

[757] Ibid.

whether she supported LRT. Then she explained why she supported it: because roads are more expensive, less safe, and more damaging to the environment.[758] No equivocation, no hesitation.

After the election, she was the only regional councillor to vote against the review and reconsideration of bus rapid transit.[759] She emphasized that what was really needed was a communication strategy to address prevalent myths about the project.[760]

When I ask her about the review, she says, "Sometimes … there's a bit of posturing to appease the public." Her colleagues backed away. "I think it had to do with getting elected," she explains. "I'm not very good at playing the political games."[761] It was difficult. "In 2010, I felt sort of left high and dry on my own with the LRT." Emphasis on the LRT itself hid the big picture, which involved express buses connecting through intensification nodes. "People couldn't see its value. They couldn't see what was intended."[762]

So Haalboom steadfastly supported the vision, and the decision to proceed with LRT. But where she herself would end up opposing the project was in voting against the design, build, finance, operate, and maintain (DBFOM) deal with a private consortium. She opposed the decision to go with a DBFOM arrangement, and the decision to award the contract using the approach, at every opportunity she was given.[763] On the DBFOM decision, she said at the time

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[758] "TriTAG Candidate Questionnaire 2010."

[759] Region of Waterloo, "Regional Council Minutes: Wednesday, January 19, 2011."

[760] Outhit, "Buses Are Back on the Table; Regional Council Worries Cost of Light-Rail Plan Will Be Prohibitive"; Region of Waterloo, "Regional Council Minutes: Wednesday, January 19, 2011."

[761] Jean Haalboom, interview by author, Kitchener, ON, September 28, 2015.

[762] Ibid.

[763] Region of Waterloo, "Special Meeting of the Planning and Works Committee Minutes: Tuesday, February 7, 2012"; Region of Waterloo, "Regional Council Minutes: Wednesday, February 8, 2012"; Region of

that the consortia were the "big fish," and "Waterloo Region's the little fish." She suggested it put the Region at a disadvantage in the deal. "Now we're into the big time and these consortiums, they've been around," she said.[764]

"I would have gladly accepted design-build," she tells me today. But she's not comfortable with the financing and maintenance. She's concerned about the example of London, in the UK, where she tells me a disagreement with the private partner led to service disruptions and unfinished stations,[765] a concern she's expressed before.[766]

But she's frustrated when people mistake her opposition to the procurement option for opposition to the LRT project. "Some people said, 'You're against LRT.' And I said, 'No, I'm not,'" she recounts. "But … it was definitely the public-private partnership." [767]

For Haalboom, the LRT, with the Region's growth planning, is about protecting rural areas and creating engaging urban neighbourhoods. She's lived in both. Haalboom grew up on a farm in Mitchell, Ontario. "It was a small farm, about 150 acres that we had. And we believed in crop rotation," she says. She tells me her father had the makings of a conservationist, despite having left school at the age of eleven. "When he sold the farm, that was the deal [with] the

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Waterloo, "Planning and Works Committee Minutes: Tuesday, March 4, 2014"; Region of Waterloo, "Regional Council Minutes: Wednesday, March 19, 2014."

[764] Paige Desmond, "Seven Teams Want to Bid on Light Rail Transit Project," *Waterloo Region Record*, December 8, 2012, First edition, sec. Local.

[765] Jean Haalboom, interview by author, Kitchener, ON, September 28, 2015.

[766] Paige Desmond, "Study Says Public-Private Partnerships Bearing Fruit," *Waterloo Region Record*, August 26, 2013, First edition, sec. News.

[767] Jean Haalboom, interview by author, Kitchener, ON, September 28, 2015.

person who bought it. That they could not clear cut the maple bush until they had their mortgage paid off."[768]

She saw a very different life in the big city. She knows what it's like to have access to good transit, and what it's like to be displaced by development. She lived in Toronto from 1966 to 1972, while her husband went to school there, and she worked as a teacher. "At first, when I was there, the subway was being built. And so it seemed like I was always in front of the bulldozer in trying to find a home," she says, about rising land values around stations. She recalls finding a place near the Davisville TTC station in a picturesque neighbourhood. "They had wood paneling and stained glass windows and lovely backyards with apple trees…. And then they'd be bought out. And the developers would come in and replace them with a high-rise. So that really, really concerned me," she says. "Nothing was conserved from those beautiful houses. Nothing." While in Toronto, Haalboom took courses toward finishing her university degree, including some in community planning, from professors who worked on stopping the Spadina Expressway. She worked on a research project about what kind of condos work best.[769]

For Haalboom, understanding the needs of successful intensification requires experience of the sort of life she had in Toronto. "I feel that perhaps … those who haven't had that experience were still back in the 1950s, where you don't have the conflict of people. We are beyond that, where you can just get in your car and go over to the grocery store," she says. She tells me how much she enjoyed living in areas where she could walk and take transit

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[768] Ibid.

[769] Ibid.

comfortably. "When we talk about what smart growth or density, or what is needed, I do believe you have to have lived it. And I did live it."[770]

Her experience when she moved to Kitchener, when her husband set up a law practice here in the 1970s, wasn't as pleasant. They tried living in Downtown Kitchener, but the area was suffering then, and there wasn't much to see. "You go walking and you go, oh, this is pretty awful."[771] She recalls a lot of drugs in the area. "It just wasn't a place where you think, oh, I'm going to raise a family."[772] When it comes to LRT in Waterloo Region, she has long talked about protecting the parts of core areas that work well, and revitalizing those that aren't.[773]

Haalboom thinks the two-tier government system has helped on the growth management file. "What I found at the Region is, you're looking at the big picture. And you are looking at the future and the health and wellbeing of residents." Things at the local level are more focused on specific sites. "How does this subdivision of 10 lots or subdivision of 20 lots or subdivision of 200, how does that fit into the big picture?" At the local level, "We never talk about that."[774]

Haalboom's view on two-tier regional government diverges from all of her Kitchener colleagues, who have told me they would prefer a one-tier system. "I really feel we need to keep it," she tells me. A single-tier arrangement would be dominated by Kitchener's perspective. "What you might find is that … Kitchener, having the most reps and the biggest land, may play the trump card all the time. So then the region would look like Kitchener."[775] I ask her about

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[770] Ibid.

[771] Ibid.

[772] Jean Haalboom, interview by author, Kitchener, ON, October 1, 2015.

[773] Outhit, "Public Brought on Board to Study Rail Transit; Region Appoints Advisory Committee."

[774] Jean Haalboom, interview by author, Kitchener, ON, October 1, 2015.

[775] Jean Haalboom, interview by author, Kitchener, ON, September 28, 2015.

those from Kitchener who would prefer a one-tier super-city. "They think it'd be great. 'Oh yes, well, we'll just walk over everybody,'" she says.[776]

"It's really important to keep those flavors," she says, of the different perspectives brought to regional council by the different communities. She highlights the townships, in particular. "They don't have a lot of money and they don't have a whole lot of staff. And their constituents, they're pragmatic." She's not sure the balance would work out as well under a single-tier arrangement. "Would there be as much respect for the rural areas?" she asks. With only one council comprised mostly of urban councillors, "Would you really have the respect for that agricultural land?" [777] Under the current system, "The rural townships bring an interesting dynamic to it. And I do believe that there's more of a balancing that goes on."[778]

In the end, Haalboom thinks attitudes at the local level will determine whether regional growth management policies are successfully implemented or not. "Honestly, Kate, it's the local understanding or the local attitudes that determine how well this is going to turn out," she says. As someone who has pushed for change from the outside, she's glad there are regional policies in place to fall back on. "When you get into … difficulty, you can say well, the Region's official plan says…"[779]

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[776] Ibid.

[777] Ibid.

[778] Ibid.

[779] Ibid.

The Veteran Rookie

Geoff Lorentz

It's a snowy afternoon in November, and I meet Geoff Lorentz in the small office at the Sunrise Shopping Centre on the west side of Kitchener, where he serves as the on-site property manager.[780]

Lorentz was the closest thing to a rookie among the 11 urban councillors of the 2010 to 2014 council. Even then, he was hardly a rookie at all. Lorentz had been serving on Kitchener City Council since 1988.[781] A union activist as a letter carrier,[782] he had worked on municipal campaigns as part of local labour advocacy efforts. He would eventually run for a vacant seat on Kitchener Council, at the urging of the mayor of the day.[783]

Lorentz's interest in politics had been heightened by a previous experience with the Region. The first house he and his wife bought was on Victoria Street, and the Region wanted to widen the road. "They didn't even expropriate. They just said, 'We're taking this, and this is how much we're giving you,'" he recalls. His wife went to the meeting, and came home crying. "It was just the worst experience. They treated you like dirt. Nobody cared about what you were saying." Lorentz resolved to do things differently. "People work all day, or have busy lives. And when they show up, it means something to them. And you should be listening to them. …if you

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[780] Region of Waterloo, "Meet Geoff Lorentz," accessed December 12, 2016, http://www.regionofwaterloo.ca/en/regionalGovernment/geofflorentz.asp.

[781] Ibid.

[782] Frank Etherington, "Debt, Ward Size on Voters' Minds," *Kitchener-Waterloo Record*, November 8, 2003, Final edition, sec. Local.

[783] Geoff Lorentz, interview by author, Kitchener, ON.

can't help them, at least be polite enough to thank them and say, we appreciate your efforts. Maybe that's old fashioned," he tells me.[784]

Lorentz served on Kitchener council for 22 years. But he also served on regional council for nearly a decade, starting in 1991. When the councils split, his colleagues Jean Haalboom and Tom Galloway ran for regional council.[785] Lorentz decided to stick with the city.[786]

Lorentz tells me he had enjoyed the new, smaller Kitchener Council that resulted from the Harris-era reforms. "We got a lot of stuff done."[787] Things got more difficult after Kitchener Council decided to enlarge itself again, with ten councillors instead of six. "I knew that there was going to be at least four new people coming on council," he says. "It's like you're in grade five and they say, well, we're putting you in with the kindergartens," he explains. "Re-learning all – I just couldn't handle it. I just needed a change," he says.[788] Lorentz would run for regional council, and win, in 2010.[789]

The rookie, then, was a two-decade veteran of Kitchener politics. "When I think back it's like, holy crap. I'll be starting my 28th year," he says. "It's been fun. I mean, I really like it. It can be really annoying sometimes. But it's fun."[790]

Despite his decades of experience, including one at regional council, the separation of the councils meant he left the regional level just before work began on the Regional Growth

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[784] Ibid.

[785] "18 Kitchener Candidates Seek Four Regional Council Seats."

[786] Region of Waterloo, "Meet Geoff Lorentz."

[787] Geoff Lorentz, interview by author, Kitchener, ON.

[788] Ibid.

[789] Caldwell, "Night of the Incumbents Top Four Municipal Leaders All Returning for Another Term."

[790] Geoff Lorentz, interview by author, Kitchener, ON.

Management Strategy in 2001.[791] He missed the debates on the RGMS. He missed the development of the Regional Official Plan, and its approval in 2009. And he missed the years of work done on, and the first approval of, the LRT.

He arrived just in time for the LRT debate to blow up. Before joining regional council, he was not enthusiastic about the project. He had long thought that transit use was a hard sell for suburban residents, when the looping design of the transit system had long made it an inefficient option for them.[792] While he had expressed some interest in LRT during the earliest work on the project,[793] Lorentz had spoken against it as early as 2006. "Who's going to ride that?" he said at the time, arguing buses could do the same job.[794] During his first regional council election in 2010, he was equally unenthusiastic. "I support looking at alternative, less expensive options instead of investing heavily in an infastructure [sic] that I am not sure would be utilized to its fullest," he told TriTAG during the election.[795] He wrote in his submission to the paper that "I am opposed to moving forward with LRT in its present form."[796]

He spoke negatively about the project for his first five months of the regional council term, leading up to the crucial vote, highlighting that he did not think the Region had the "critical

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[791] Seiling, "Smart Growth and the Region of Waterloo: Planning for Our Future."

[792] Terry Pender, "Parking the Garage Plan; Provide Free Rides in Core to Boost Public Transit, Resident Suggests," *Kitchener-Waterloo Record*, November 28, 2005, Final edition, sec. Local.

[793] Stacey Ash, "Light Rail Transit Proposal Deferred by Councillors," *Kitchener-Waterloo Record*, April 23, 2002, Final edition, sec. LOCAL.

[794] Jeff Outhit, "Traffic; It's Time to Fix Waterloo Region's No. 1 Concern:," *Kitchener-Waterloo Record*, May 20, 2006, Final edition, sec. Front.

[795] "TriTAG Candidate Questionnaire 2010."

[796] Geoff Lorentz, "Geoff Lorentz, 55," *Waterloo Region Record*, October 15, 2010, Final edition, sec. News.

mass" of transit riders to support LRT.[797] But by May of 2011, he wasn't prepared to say how he would vote on the project, and the Record issued a correction on a story that stated he would vote against LRT.[798]

When the crucial vote came in June, he voted in favour.[799] "I think people have a better understanding of the whys and whats of LRT," Lorentz said that night. "There is no question that the steps we will take tonight are the right ones."[800]

I ask him about his change of heart. "I watched our downtown go from a healthy downtown when I was a kid to being destroyed by malls like this," he says, of the car-oriented suburban shopping centre where we sit today. Downtown revitalization was one of Lorentz's long-term priorities as a member of Kitchener Council,[801] and, upon his departure from Kitchener Council, he cited work towards it as one of council's biggest accomplishments during his time.[802]

LRT fit into that goal. "We needed to have a better plan to kind of trick people to come back downtown again. And so when we started looking at intensification, we started looking at how we were able to do that, this whole idea of a rail system running through really started – it's

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[797] Outhit, "Buses Are Back on the Table; Regional Council Worries Cost of Light-Rail Plan Will Be Prohibitive"; Outhit, "Mixed Views on Transit Poll."

[798] Pender, "Light Rail Hinges on 3 Votes; Crucial Light-Rail Vote at Regional Council Hangs on the Decisions of Three Township Mayors."

[799] Region of Waterloo, "Regional Council Minutes: Wednesday, June 15, 2011," June 15, 2011.

[800] Outhit, "Rail Plan Passes; Regional Council Votes 9-2 in Support of 'Transformational' Rapid Transit."

[801] Etherington, "Debt, Ward Size on Voters' Minds."

[802] Melinda Dalton, "Council Bids Farewell to Long-Serving Members," *Waterloo Region Record*, November 16, 2010, First edition, sec. Local.

like tunnel vision," he explains. "You see this thing and you say, man, this ties everything together. This is where it's at."[803]

The realization came only once he was elected to the job. "I really didn't have that epiphany until after I was on regional council," he says. He tells me one of his former Kitchener Council colleagues has recently been criticizing him for changing his stance on LRT. "He's saying, 'Well, it's too bad you lied to the people.' I say, 'I didn't lie to anybody.' 'Oh, you did.' I said, 'I did not…. I didn't really understand it.'" Time was tight when he was still a city councillor. "When you're getting packages and packages of stuff every week, you're just trying to keep up with what you're doing," he tells me. "And it's very hard to keep up with what the other guys are doing, right? So I really didn't spend a lot of time on it."[804]

He learned about the vision of the project, and how it connected to the Region's growth management plans, after he returned to regional council. "When I saw how it was all going to pull together, that's when I started supporting it. I was one of the strongest supporters. And it seems to resolve so many problems that we were experiencing, not just in our core, but Waterloo's, and I suspect Cambridge's as well."[805]

Lorentz is frustrated that the local newspapers "feed off of" controversy as the Region tries to prepare for the future. "Don't criticize us for trying to do the right thing," he says. The public needs time and support to think through their new transportation options, and consider whether they need two or three cars anymore. "We've got to show them that the system will work," he says. "Cut us some slack. Let's see how this thing goes. I can't see that it's going to be

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[803] Geoff Lorentz, interview by author, Kitchener, ON.

[804] Ibid.

[805] Ibid.

a dog," he says. "I was around when they built the expressway," he recalls. "My grandpa thought it was the stupidest thing we ever did. Look at it now."[806]

Despite reactionary coverage of LRT, at the end of that council term, Lorentz ran his 2014 election campaign on a promise of intensification and limiting suburban expansion, with an "integrated transportation network."[807] He's a supporter of the Region's growth management approach. "I think, at the end of the day, we've tried to implement common sense policies, and tried to use common sense in our decision-making. Nothing over the top. No grandiose plans."[808]

Lorentz suggests this is indicative of the way city and country life is seen here. "We kind of always got it," he says of this area. "We've always known, I think, that we wanted to have a community where you could have the best of both worlds. You know? And for people that live in the country to live in harmony with the city, and not have to worry about being taken over."[809]

Proximity to the country is real for Lorentz, who has lived in Kitchener his entire life,[810] and in southwest Kitchener for most of it.[811] His father owned a feed mill in St. Clements, in present-day Wellesley Township. His parents had a home not far from here. "They had a ranch bungalow, right across from the old school that was there," he explains. "When we first moved there, we were in the township, believe it or not," he says, telling me about a riding stable on the other side of the road. "As the city moved out, we were still always kind of on the edge. I like the

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[806] Ibid.

[807] "Geoff Lorentz," *Waterloo Region Record*, October 7, 2014, sec. News.

[808] Geoff Lorentz, interview by author, Kitchener, ON.

[809] Ibid.

[810] "Geoff Lorentz."

[811] Geoff Lorentz, interview by author, Kitchener, ON.

transition of having the township so close. That the city's on one side and the township was on the other. It's referred to sometimes as houses and horses."[812]

Living where he does, Lorentz still experiences the country on a regular basis. "I love going out in the country. I'm out there almost every day, driving through. It's just beautiful. So we really have to be aware that things could change, so we have to be on our guard."[813]

That vigilance was needed when greenfield developers challenged the Regional Official Plan at the OMB. It's not the first time Lorentz has seen things differently than they do. "I have friends that are developers, and we don't agree a lot on any of this stuff," he says. "I look at a piece of land and say, man, I just can't believe that I used to take my kids there to get pumpkins, and other people say, what a beautiful development," he laughs. "I firmly supported everything that we did," he says, of the official plan's countryside protections. "I know how growth works. I understand assessment. I understand all of that stuff. But I also know that pigs get fat and hogs get slaughtered," he says. "And I think over the last four years, these developers just wanted everything. They wanted the earth, moon, and stars. And they wanted it now," he recalls.[814]

The decision to appeal the OMB ruling, Lorentz tells me, "was a no brainer," despite the expense and how long it took. It was a difficult negotiation process, fraught with a few personality conflicts between the two sides, and different approaches among the developers themselves. "We had some new players in the game, like Mattamy. And we had some old players that just didn't want to give an inch. And they were so entrenched it was ridiculous," he says.[815]

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[812] Ibid.

[813] Ibid.

[814] Ibid.

[815] Ibid.

As for the settlement, it was the best that was possible. "Sometimes in politics you just have to hold your nose and …wait for the next fight and see if you can do a little better," he tells me. But he thinks that the developers will be more circumspect in the future. "At the end of the day, I think they realized that whatever had transpired had gotten completely out of hand. And I don't think you'll ever see that again. I just don't think the … entrenchment's there anymore," he says. "There's no sense spending all your treasure trying to make money."[816]

He was pleased, particularly, that all of the mayors were on board with the settlement. "There wasn't anybody saying, 'You guys can do what you want, but our municipality thinks this is wrong.' It wasn't at all. We were 'all in it together, girls. Never mind the weather, girls,'" he says, quoting an old skipping song that he used to sing with his daughters.[817]

The sentiment describes Lorentz's views on the two-tier system. Lorentz is firmly with those who would prefer a single city in the Region. "I've always supported amalgamation, right from the get go," he tells me. In the tail end of the Harris years, he supported a one-tier option, voting with Kitchener colleagues against the final two-tier rationalization in 2000.[818]

Lorentz would still like to see a single-tier government. "I don't believe in bigger is always better," he says, "but I do think that, when everybody's pulling on the same rope, it makes it a lot easier."[819]

Lorentz tells me that, over the years, opposition to a single-tier city has included concerns that it was a land grab to develop the townships and control their water. "Protectionism I guess is

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[816] Ibid.

[817] Ibid.

[818] Caldwell, "Kitchener Backtracks on Reform Consensus"; Rubinoff, "Region Reform Falls Apart; Councillors Agree to Defer All Talks until after November Elections."

[819] Geoff Lorentz, interview by author, Kitchener, ON.

all right, but in my view, I always thought that if we had one level of government we could probably do a better job of managing all of our resources."[820]

Still, Lorentz thinks the results of the current system have been alright for growth management. "We help bake the cake, and the cities slice it up. And I think we've always worked very well, hand in hand," he says. "I don't think there's ever been … any big battles over any of that stuff. But you know, Ken's pretty good at working behind the scenes and smoothing things over," he says, of the long-time regional chair's role in making these issues work.[821]

In general, Lorentz thinks the area has filled the gaps left by the province in the current local government system with practical solutions. "If you have mayhem, everybody just gets the band aids out and some glue, and tries to put something together," he laughs. "It's worked," he tells me. "But it really is patchwork. It's very hard."[822]

He doesn't see the system changing soon. "I think Mike Harris learned the hard way, you can't force municipalities to get together. It needs to be by mutual consent. There needs to be a bit of a win-win for everybody." And the current politics on the ground don't favour that. "As long as Doug is around, I don't think you'll ever see it happen," Lorentz tells me of Cambridge's long-time mayor, who has consistently fought amalgamation efforts. The current Cambridge representatives on regional council, he feels, are focused on issues that affect Cambridge directly and don't focus on the big picture. And in Waterloo, "Waterloo's always – 'It's better than Kitchener.' Well, come on," he says. "Somebody comes to the town, [and] they don't know where the hell they are." Yet Waterloo voters solidly rejected a 2010 plebiscite question to

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[820] Ibid.

[821] Ibid.

[822] Ibid.

launch amalgamation discussions with Kitchener, though Kitchener voters approved it. "Kitchener said yes, and Waterloo said no. That was just talking about shared services, you know. I mean, it's crazy."[823][824]

Still, he thinks some tweaks might be possible. "I think there may be an opportunity with fire. The problem is, then members of Kitchener Council, Waterloo Council, Cambridge Council, will just say, oh, what's left? You've basically taken everything else. We've got the … dog catcher and dog license and parks. What else is there?" he explains. "It's a good argument. And it would be one I'd be making if I was there" at the city level, he says. "But I'm not there."[825]

Learning from Webs of Beliefs

In Part III, I used narrative vignettes based on interviews, newspaper accounts and other public documents to tell a story about each of the 16 regional councillors of the 2010 to 2014 council term. It is my hope, as noted in the introduction to this part, to maintain the "openness to competing interpretations"[826] that is a strength of narrative, and that those reading the above will have taken away different insights, observations, and new questions. I am hesitant to impose my own views too heavily on a form of writing that I value for its contestability, openness, and resistance to reification.

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[823] Ibid.

[824] The wording of the referendum question was "Do you support the members of the Kitchener and Waterloo councils engaging in discussion about the advantages and disadvantages of merging the cities of Kitchener and Waterloo?" Melinda Dalton, "K-W Merger Campaign Launched," *Waterloo Region Record*, September 17, 2010, Final edition, sec. Local.

[825] Geoff Lorentz, interview by author, Kitchener, ON.

[826] Czarniawska-Joerges, *Narratives in Social Science Research*, 8.

It is nevertheless valuable to highlight some broad observations that can be drawn from these 16 stories. In the final chapter, the conclusion, I will address a number of the key findings of this project about the Waterloo case, when Part III is taken with the first two parts. Here, I describe some more immediate observations about the value of Part III itself. Specifically, I address enacting traditions, explaining actions, generalizing, and knowing identities.

Enacting Traditions

The vignettes in Part III show how the historical story of Part I actually functions as a tradition for situated agents. Bevir and Rhodes argue that

> A certain relationship should exist between beliefs and practices if they are to make up a tradition. For a start, the relevant beliefs and practices should have passed from generation to generation. Such socialization may not be intentional. The continuity lies in the themes developed and passed on over time, rather than any self-conscious sense of continuity.[827]

There are indeed continuities in the themes that have been adopted by these situated agents, and these continuities can be seen in Part III. All of them describe beliefs about growth, regional government, and the role of the urban and rural that arise from that tradition.

Some of these connections to this historical tradition are quite explicit, as when Ken Seiling or Doug Craig discuss the relevance, from their own perspectives, of events like the Fyfe Report in 1970 or the separation of councils in 2000. Some of these connections are less explicit, but no less relevant. Jane Mitchell, for example, describes her own use of the expanding transit network or watching the city grow around her since her childhood. Les Armstrong speaks of the importance of agriculture to his township. And any number of councillors tell me that LRT is about planning, not transportation.

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[827] Bevir and Rhodes, *Governance Stories*, 8.

These more and less explicit connections show councillors' broader socialization into this tradition. This socialization looked different to every actor, to some extent. Some, like Jean Haalboom, Todd Cowan, Brenda Halloran, and Claudette Millar, were drawn into conflicts over land use planning before they were elected to some level of local government. Many more, though, learned about planning on the job, after they were already responsible for planning policy decisions. Regardless, all of these people learned about planning and regional government as they went, both before and after their election. These vignettes provide a glimpse of what this socialization process meant for each actor.

Thus, beliefs that reflect the major themes of the historical narrative of Part I are woven throughout the vignettes of Part III. But while the themes are the same, the particulars are different. Different actors have taken different lessons from this broad tradition. While they have integrated connected beliefs about growth management and regional government into their webs of beliefs, the specific beliefs that they hold differ for each person, to a greater or lesser degree.

This shows two things. First, the tradition of growth management and regional government in Waterloo Region is a multifaceted one, with definite contours but without clear borders. In contrast, many of the traditions interpreted by Bevir and Rhodes are more immediately recognizable and thoroughly discussed across academic and practitioner contexts, such as federalism and neoliberalism.[828] The tradition of growth management and regional government in Waterloo Region is recognizable, as Part I shows, but it is relatively new, local, and less interpreted.

Second, and most importantly, it shows that "agents are able to innovate against the background of a tradition," and tradition thus "influences (without determining …) the beliefs"

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[828] Ibid., chap. 4.

that situated agents "later go on to adopt."[829] In these vignettes, we see the strong themes of this tradition. But we also see the different ways in which these situated agents have made these traditions their own, and integrated them into their own webs of beliefs in different ways.

Thus, as Bevir and Rhodes's philosophical framework suggests, a tradition is important because it "is the background against which individuals come to adopt an initial web of beliefs," and "Traditions help explain why people hold the beliefs they do."[830] Examining these specific individuals show some of the diverse ways that the tradition of growth management and regional government has become part of the webs of beliefs of these decision-makers, and how they have made this tradition their own. It thus highlights the crucial link between traditions and beliefs.

Explaining Actions

The vignettes of Part III also serve to further explain the actions of these 16 regional councillors. Bevir and Rhodes argue that "any adequate explanation of actions or practices must refer to the beliefs that animate them. To understand the relevant beliefs is to explain the action or practice."[831] While Part II locates its explanation in the beliefs of situated agents as a group and the dilemmas that group faced or did not face, Part III takes this insight to its logical extent. It locates explanation for actions in the specific webs of beliefs of specific situated agents.

By considering actions at a micro-level, in the context of the individual's own web of beliefs, we can explain their actions using "conditional connections" that "are neither necessary

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[829] Bevir and Rhodes, *Routledge Handbook of Interpretive Political Science*, 17.

[830] Ibid.

[831] Bevir and Rhodes, *Governance Stories*, 20.

nor arbitrary."[832] Thus we find in these vignettes that people did the same things for different reasons, and that people did different things for the same reasons.

In many cases, those who made the same decisions did so for very different reasons. Those who opposed LRT, by and large, do not oppose smart growth goals any more than their colleagues who supported the project. Their opposition came from other beliefs, like concern over Cambridge's treatment in the Region, or concern over the treatment of those members of the public who opposed the project.

Those who voted against awarding the 2014 contract to build LRT, in particular, showed a diverse range of reasons for taking the same action. Three votes against came from those who had opposed the project in 2011, for two very different reasons: Cambridge's exclusion from LRT and the importance of listening to "Ma and Pa Waterloo." But they were joined in their opposition by one of the project's most determined supporters, who opposed the public-private partnership arrangement.

All councillors told me that they voted to support the appeal of the OMB decision, but again, for very different reasons. Some were legitimately horrified by the OMB ruling, though some were horrified because it would undermine the Region or the province's efforts to curtail urban sprawl, and some were horrified because they had been disrespected and overruled by a distant and unelected provincial tribunal. Some felt that the Region's numbers in the land budget were not the right ones, but the OMB's numbers were not correct, either, and thus a third solution needed to be negotiated. And some actually did not have a problem with the ruling at all, even advocating behind the scenes against the appeal. Yet in the end, they voted as one,

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[832] Bevir and Rhodes, *Routledge Handbook of Interpretive Political Science*, 17.

whether to support smart growth, support staff, oppose provincial meddling, or promote a negotiated settlement.

We also see that these people did different things for the same reasons. There was broad scepticism among a number of the councillors regarding regional staff's argument that aging in place would decline. This included both Jean Haalboom and Jim Wideman, who told me they were not convinced about the decline of aging in place. Both also expressed concerns about increasing housing density in the region, and whether it was going to be done badly. Yet Jean Haalboom was perhaps the OMB ruling's most disgusted critic on regional council, and she was displeased by the settlement. Jim Wideman advocated against appealing the decision at all, and thought the settlement was good for both sides.

Claudette Millar and Doug Craig both consistently cited Cambridge's treatment in their opposition to the LRT project. But while Craig advocated for bus rapid transit, Millar twice voted for the LRT technology.

Part III shows that we cannot explain these actions using ready-made explanations, even those guided by the previous analysis of tradition and group dilemmas. Each individual's beliefs and the actions they take due to them cannot be predicted by the municipality they represent, where they grew up, or whether they have lived in an urban or rural place. Or, as Bevir and Rhodes put it, "their reasoning, beliefs, desires, and actions cannot be simply read off from allegedly objective social facts about them."[833]

Through Part III, we learn that none of these ready-made explanations meaningfully hold. Representing Cambridge does not tell us what a regional councillor believes about the Region and will do as a result. The mayor of a municipality that will benefit from LRT might oppose it,

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[833] Bevir and Rhodes, *The State as Cultural Practice*, 73.

to many people's surprise, for reasons that were mostly not about the project itself. Support for LRT might come from township mayors concerned about protecting agriculture, but the regional councillor with the most direct experience in agriculture might be the most skeptical about the extent to which urban expansion should be curtailed, and advocate for letting the OMB ruling stand. While Kitchener residents and politicians have a history of support for amalgamation and Waterloo residents and politicians have a history of opposition, there is a Waterloo regional councillor who supports it and a Kitchener councillor who is opposed.

Explaining why these situated agents took the actions they did requires more than a reference to the objective facts about them. It requires showing how their beliefs led to their actions, and how those beliefs are influenced by a tradition but ultimately adopted, modified, and enacted by people with agency.

Generalizing

Despite my strategic resistance to generalization, noted above, it can have its uses. Once we have considered each individual's actions in context and explained them with reference to their webs of beliefs, a more informed level of generalization is possible that can complement the more contextually situated insights above.

Most strikingly, it is possible to see that these 16 people have a great deal in common. If there is an 'average' Region of Waterloo councillor from this council term, he (or quite possibly she) is an older, white, middle class professional who has lived in the region since at least the 1970s, and has served in local politics for decades. S/he is a former teacher who represents an urban area but has meaningful and extended experiences of the countryside.

Such a total generalization allows us to consider the ways that power channelled through race and class, in particular, constrains who gets to decide in representative liberal democracies at the municipal level, and to observe that this has played out in Waterloo, as well.

From this level of generalization, we can also see and reflect on the long histories that these decision-makers have in Waterloo Region. Almost all of them have spent either their entire lives or the bulk of their adult lives there. Their various experiences of different parts of the region, and the time period over which they have watched the area change, is remarkable.

We can also learn from the varying levels of candor visible across different topics. These individuals are very careful about what they say regarding how they see their relationships with developers, as they know that there is considerably scrutiny on the choices they make in the delicate, ongoing dance in which they are engaged with developers who have so much invested in their decisions, and upon whom councillors must rely for city building. They are also very careful about what they say about each other, and particularly about what they are seen to be saying about each other on the record. Some of them still have ongoing working relationships with their colleagues, while we can posit that others' beliefs about collegiality in the context of elected office keeps them from framing their relations with even their frequent adversaries in a less than charitable light. It is necessary, on these questions and on others, to read between the lines. But since interviews are samples of social reality, not windows on the facts themselves, this need not trouble us excessively. In interpreting their interpretations, we can make observations about the choices they make to interpret some things in more detail and with more candor than other things.

Thus, such generalizations can be made from the vignettes in Part III, and they can provide insights for our interpretations of the Waterloo case, as well. Because such

generalizations do not supplant the micro-explanations in the vignettes themselves, they allow me to generally resist the reifications common to such generalized analyses while still considering what we can learn from looking across these stories.

Knowing Identities

While we can learn from generalization, the strength of the insights of Part III rest largely on its individualizable details. My ability to show that a specific tradition is embedded in the web of beliefs of a situated agent, and to explain her or his actions in the context of her or his web of beliefs, relies on being able to talk with some candor about specific individuals. These insights have only been possible because I have been able to tell you someone's name, where they grew up, their voting record and the public record of their comments over time. I have been able to recount comments and insights for attribution that would not have been usable under a requirement of participant anonymity, as the speaker would have been recognizable to many who knew him or her. In short, many of the insights of Part III are possible only because my subjects did not need to remain anonymous.

This is not possible for all research projects; indeed, it is not an option that is open to Bevir and Rhodes. Given what interests them, they need to consider the beliefs and actions of people they cannot identify, like police officers and ministry officials. Their application of what interests them means they are bound, both by the requirements of research ethics approval and to ensure reasonable candor, to reliably obscure the identity of those whose webs of beliefs are of interest to them.

In a study of a set of politicians on topics like this one, it can be possible to speak about them as individuals, and to have them say different and interesting things, on the record. This is particularly true in municipal politics in Ontario, where there is no formal party organization, and

thus no party line. While what they say could affect their relationships with their constituents, community or business groups, or other politicians, no one can directly fire them from their caucus or from their position for what they have said. Thus, despite the important limitations on candor imposed by politicians' susceptibility to public opinion, each councillor has to determine for themselves what it is best for them to say or leave unsaid. They must do this all the time, as they speak to the press, to members of the public, and to each other.

Because I am able to link the data collected in my interviews to the specific person I interviewed and the long public record of their activities, I am able to create a robust account of the web of beliefs of each individual. This lack of anonymity has allowed for the in-depth consideration of webs of beliefs in this section. An analysis that is worthy of the philosophical foundations of this interpretive methodology must consider the micro-level operations of beliefs, actions, and webs of beliefs within specific situated agents, at least in cases where such connections are possible.

As noted in the introduction to Part III, there is additional value in trying to explain politicians' insights. It is a matter of public good in a representative democracy to attempt to explain the actions and reasoning of those who make decisions on our behalf, using our authority. Trust of politicians is low, but representative democracy depends on members of the public having some level of trust of those in office. Municipal government is the closest level of government to people, and their local politicians are those with whom they are most likely to have contact. Accounts like the vignettes in Part III can provide opportunities to see politicians as people: to consider how they sort through the problems they face given what they believe and the constraints that they confront.

Conclusion

> To locate beliefs in webs of beliefs, and to locate webs of beliefs against the background of traditions and dilemmas, is to explain those beliefs and the actions and practices they inspire. An interpretive approach explains actions and practices by beliefs, and it explains beliefs by traditions and dilemmas.[1]
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>   – Bevir and Rhodes, *Governance Stories*

Three Stories

In the three parts of this monograph, I have told three different kinds of stories. Each of these three stories can function on their own, for a purpose.

The first story is about tradition. Outlined using a historical narrative, it is the tradition of regional government and growth management in the Waterloo area, which have conditioned each other. It shows that unbridled urban expansion led to public policy problems and conflicts between local municipalities that led to the creation of regional government. The first Regional Official Policies Plan was a key process through which the Region and the area municipalities defined regional relationships, and would set the direction the Region would take on growth management into the 21st century. Changes to the regional government structure during the 1990s Harris-era reforms would empower the Region to embrace smart growth policies in the 21st century and to provide leadership on smart growth at the provincial level. On its own, this historical narrative of Part I shows that growth management and regional government have changed together in Waterloo Region, and should be understood together. In my approach, this historical narrative outlines the contours of a tradition of growth management and regional government in the Waterloo area.

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[1] Bevir and Rhodes, *Governance Stories*, 20.

The second story is about dilemmas. Outlined at the level of council as a group, it provides an account of the dilemmas faced by regional council during the 2010 to 2014 term of office with respect to its smart growth plans. It examines the pressure to cancel the LRT project that council faced, and explains how council resolved the money dilemma, the public opinion dilemma, and the regional dilemma. It also explains why meaningful dilemmas did not form for council when developers and the Ontario Municipal Board threatened its new Regional Official Plan. On its own, this story serves as a fairly conventional political story of the decision-making of an elected body. It is perhaps the closest of the three accounts to that which might be told by informed, contemporary observers who followed the LRT debate and the official plan appeal in the 2010 to 2014 period. It is also a viewpoint of particular interest to planning practitioners in jurisdictions like Ontario, since on many planning matters a council is the relevant decision-making body, and the reasoning and decisions of a council as a whole are often under scrutiny in land use planning appeals. In my approach, this story focuses attention on dilemmas, and explains external pressures with reference to the way that they do or do not necessitate modifications in the webs of beliefs of a group of specific decision-makers.

The third story is about webs of beliefs. Outlined at the level of individuals, it is comprised of 16 stories in the form of vignettes about each regional councillor from that term of office, told through the perspective of my interview with them. On its own, this story allows us to see overarching themes and compare and contrast the views of different councillors on the same issues. It highlights that each of these councillors supported smart growth in their own way, and for their own reasons. Most importantly, within my approach, it explains each councillor's actions with reference to that councillor's beliefs, and places those beliefs in the context of their broader web of beliefs.

Thus, for some purposes, these three stories can each stand on their own. However, for my purposes, I need all three of them. Without the historical story, my account of council's defence of smart growth in the face of dilemmas would miss how council came to support those policies in the first place, and the individual account would lack an assessment of the tradition that influenced each councillor's web of beliefs. Without the group story, the historical account and the individual account would lack focus on the specific decisions and the political pressures of the moment in which they were made. Without the individual story, I cannot show how the historical tradition outlined in Part I is enacted as part of the webs of beliefs of situated agents, and I cannot show that what looks like a consensus in the group story is actually the result of diverse sets of beliefs put into action by those 16 situated agents.

Thus, each of these stories, on its own, captures something that the other two stories miss. These three kinds of stories have been necessitated by my question. I set out to explain how smart growth was embraced in Waterloo Region, and why the Region of Waterloo's council chose to defend it when it was challenged in the 2010 to 2014 council term. Excluding any one of these stories would leave my account excessively blind to history, group decision-making, or individual agents and their webs of beliefs.

Together, these three stories both support each other and trouble each other. A more conventional approach might have focused on telling a single coherent story, and attempting to resolve any seeming contradictions that arise within it. By allowing these three stories to play off of each other, and to fill in gaps that each of them leaves, this approach provides a robust account of smart growth in Waterloo Region.

Main Findings

This robust account has explained why smart growth has been embraced in Waterloo Region, and more specifically why regional councillors defended the Region's smart growth plans against two major threats. Here, I highlight some of the main findings of this project, and what we have learned from these three kinds of stories about the Waterloo case.

Light Rail Transit

We have learned that the light rail transit project has indeed been about growth management. From the historical story, we learn that the vision for light rail transit in the Waterloo area is older than regional government itself. The first regional official plan had outlined a central transit corridor, and a long-term vision for an intensified urban corridor with regionally provided transit service. It was not until the Region emerged from the fractious local government reform debates of the 1990s with newfound control over the transit system and a strengthened council that serious consideration of the LRT project became possible, as part of a smart growth-based Regional Growth Management Strategy. Original approval of the first phase of the project, in 2009, was justified primarily on land use planning grounds.

From the group story, we learn that the challenge to the project during and after the 2010 election presented three main dilemmas for regional council: the money dilemma, the public opinion dilemma, and the regional dilemma. The money dilemma, caused by a funding shortfall, was resolved through tweaks to the financial plan. The public opinion dilemma was resolved because councillors could see support for the project along with opposition, and opponents did not address the central concerns behind council's support for the project. The regional dilemma was resolved when council opted to continue with Phase 1 LRT in Waterloo and Kitchener, despite the damage to the regional relationship that ensued.

From the vignettes, we learn that councillors who continued to support the project mostly did so because of their belief that it was necessary to support smart growth goals such as intensification and agricultural and environmental protections. Some had supported the project through various phases for years, while others who just joined regional council describe belatedly coming to support the project once they were elected and learned about its intended effects on growth management.

The few who opposed the project did not, by and large, oppose smart growth goals any more than those who supported the project. They had different concerns, whether they were about the treatment of members of the public who were opposed to the project, or the treatment of Cambridge in the regional family.

In all cases, councillors' beliefs about LRT are connected to their unique webs of beliefs. Whether supporting or opposing the project, we learn from the vignettes that councillors' most important beliefs about LRT are not generally about public transit. They are about smart growth, or about other beliefs that have overridden their beliefs about smart growth.

Appealing the OMB Ruling

We have learned that the decision to appeal the OMB ruling against the Regional Official Plan can be seen both as an example of council's commitment to its smart growth plans, and as an example of the diversity of views actually held by councillors on the Regional Official Plan.

In the historical story, we learn that the most recent Regional Official Plan was the culmination of many years of work, and was important to give legal force to the Regional Growth Management Strategy that the LRT was intended to support.

In the group story, we learn that neither the challenge made by developers in appealing the ROP nor the challenge made by the OMB in their ruling gave council much reason to modify

its beliefs and decide to weaken the plan. Broad public support for the appeal, along with the mistakes made by the Board and the implications the ruling would have across the Greater Golden Horseshoe, was enough to prevent the formation of meaningful dilemmas for regional council.

In the vignettes, we learn that the strong front council put up against challenges to the plan belie a much broader range of views on the details of the land budget and the official plan held by diverse regional councillors. While all councillors told me they voted for the appeal, some were not convinced that regional staff's numbers were the right ones, and for one committee chair, this was enough for him to advocate against the appeal. In marked contrast, other councillors were genuinely horrified by the ruling, either for its promotion of sprawl or for its disregard for regional council's legitimate role in planning.

While in camera deliberations are difficult to assess, there is reason to think that this diversity of views hidden under council's more united public front aided both in the decision to negotiate a settlement alongside the appeal process, and the decision to accept a fairly good settlement offer when it had been secured.

Thus, what looks in like a strong consensus in Part II is shown in Part III to be a much more contingent and surprisingly stable overlap in views.

Regional Land Budget

We have learned that the Region's land budget is highly technical, but has played a crucial role in the Region's defence of smart growth. In the historical story, we learn that the Region's land budget for its most recent official plan was based on the principles of the provincial Growth Plan, but was designed by the Region in the absence of direction to municipalities from the province on how land budgeting should be conducted under the new

Growth Plan. The Region's land budget differed from the land budgets created by other municipalities in the Greater Golden Horseshoe, which were based on a modified housing-by-type analysis. Regional staff maintained that the Growth Plan intentionally required a change to land budgeting practices to remove housing-by-type.

In the group story, we learn that the OMB ruling on the land budget, which chose the developers' land budget over the Region's, actually created a hybrid methodology by also siding with the Region on the takeouts. The effect was that twice as much land as the developers asked for would have to be added to the designated greenfield area to satisfy the requirements of the ruling. This significant error in the ruling has never been publicly acknowledged, though there is reason to expect that council was aware through its in camera briefings that the ruling was much worse than everyone else thought it was.

From the vignettes, we learn that, despite the highly technical nature of the land budget process, councillors still have connections to some of its aspects. This can be seen especially on the question of the decline of aging in place. One councillor, himself recently retired and living alone in a bungalow, told me he would be better off in an apartment. Other councillors told me they were sceptical about the decline of aging in place, and often tie their comments to their own experiences with elderly parents who wanted to stay in their home, or are themselves older and wish to remain in their homes. This shows that even the most technical planning processes can connect to the existing webs of beliefs of non-expert situated agents, and those connections can form the basis of responses to the policies.

Expertise

We have learned that expertise has played varied but key roles in growth management in Waterloo Region, particularly through professional planners. In the historical story, we learn that

experts like Bill Thomson were as involved with the politics of the day in the Waterloo area as they were with the more technical aspects of planning. We also learn that, in the context of the regional system, implementing the Regional Growth Management Strategy required expert staff from both tiers of municipal government to both believe in its vision and work to implement its details.

In the group story, we learn that experts were crucial in the way that regional council responded to challenges to the Region's smart growth plans. Despite a changing political climate, after re-examining the evidence and conducting more public consultations, expert staff and consultants working on the LRT project continued to essentially recommend the same rapid transit option that had been approved in 2009. This left council in a position to resolve its own dilemmas over finances, public opinion, and the regional family. Disputes over expert assessments were at the heart of the Region's OMB case, and the Region's appeal of the OMB decision on the land budget, particularly given the OMB's technical errors, of which regional planners were aware.

In the vignettes, many councillors expressed their particular appreciation for the role of staff experts in the creation and implementation of these policies. Some described the extent to which politicians, particularly upon taking office, must rely on staff experts to learn what the major issues are and how the municipality should respond to a given problem. Some described capacity issues in smaller area municipalities, which may have had few or no planners on staff, making it difficult to be proactive about planning issues.

Some councillors cited their respect for or trust in staff as a significant reason for supporting LRT or the Regional Official Plan, even in cases where they themselves did not have full confidence that the particulars of the policies were the right ones. And in one surprising case,

a mayor's vote against the LRT can largely be explained based on her past experiences feeling railroaded by a local council and their experts.

Taken together, we see planning experts have significant influence over the decisions made at municipal councils in Waterloo Region, and that this influence is channeled through the politicians who, as non-experts, must choose to rely on their expertise, or to reject it. In the case of smart growth in Waterloo Region, recent regional councillors have overwhelmingly opted to trust staff.

Growth Management and Regional Government

We have learned that, in important ways, regional government in the Waterloo area is about growth management, and growth management in the Waterloo area is about regional government. As Bevir and Rhodes would put it, regional government and growth management have conditioned each other.

In the historical story, we learn that the creation of the Region itself was a reaction to enormous urban expansion in the 1960s and the conflicts that resulted from it. The creation of the first Regional Official Plan was a major way that the new relationships in regional government were negotiated. The fights over municipal restructuring, and possible amalgamation, in the 1990s led both to planning changes and, most importantly, to a strengthened role for the regional municipality and its council, while maintaining strong area municipalities. In the 21st century, these changes would facilitate the Region's embrace of smart growth and leadership on provincial smart growth initiatives, as regional leadership was supported through buy-in and implementation at the area municipalities.

In the vignettes, we learn that regional government has been connected to growth management not simply through the unspecified forces of a reified institution. It has been

connected to growth management through the people involved. Each of these councillors has, in their own way, been socialized into the broader tradition of regional government and growth management in Waterloo Region. Many councillors were brought into this tradition over decades, as they served on regional or area municipal councils while both growth management and municipal reform decisions were debated and made. But before that, many had some exposure through other roles and experiences that shaped their views of how local government should work and how growth should be managed. A few found themselves quite abruptly on regional council in 2010, without previous elected experience. They, too, tell their own story of how growth management and regional government fit together.

To understand smart growth in Waterloo Region, the tradition of regional government and growth management must be seen as part of the diverse webs of beliefs of policymakers in Waterloo Region. Situated agents have adopted that tradition, while modifying it in response to dilemmas posed to their web of beliefs, whether through political events, or their own diverse experiences.

Thus, smart growth in Waterloo Region is about regional government. But the lines cannot be draw, cleanly and simply, to say that regional government caused smart growth, or that growth management concerns caused regional government. Rather, they condition each other. Together they form a tradition, and that tradition is enacted by situated agents who modify their beliefs in response to dilemmas.

Local Government Reform

We have learned that Waterloo Region's two-tier regional government system has been both relatively successful and constantly contested.

In the historical story, we learn that efforts for local government reform have arisen out of external pressures or internal conflicts. Disagreements over the appropriate form for local government in the Waterloo area go back to the 1960s, resulting in the 1973 regional amalgamation. Continuing debates became particularly heated in the 1990s before the issue calmed down again. From this story, we learn that advocates from different municipalities have had very different visions about how local government in the area should be structured.

In the group story, we learn that the spectre of regional reform animates other debates even today, in a time when the issue has been relatively quiet. One of the main dilemmas faced by regional council on the LRT project was an extension of the long history of conflict over just local government arrangements, particularly with respect to Cambridge's role in the Region.

From the vignettes, we learn that there is considerable disagreement on regional reform. Some would fight forever, and have for many years, against amalgamation, while others want to see a single-tier government. Still others think the two-tier system we have now is the right system, with or without some tweaks. Some councillors think smart growth has happened in Waterloo Region because of the two-tiered regional government system. Some think smart growth has happened in spite of it. Some think it has not mattered at all.

At the same time, however, the vignettes show some consistent themes about regional government. For the most part, in their own way and in their own words, these people see their roles as regional councillors as important. Most of them articulate, in their rationale for supporting these smart growth policies, that they have a responsibility to act in the interest of the region as a whole that is distinct from their responsibility to the municipality, or municipally bounded group of constituents, that they represent. We might particularly expect this to be true of the directly elected regional councillors, since separation of the councils was advocated on

just such a basis. But we find this is largely true even of the mayors who were not elected to regional council directly, and who instead serve because of their mayoral office for an area municipality. When they sit around that regional council horseshoe, most of them believe that they have regional obligations.

There is also some broad agreement that amalgamation is not on the radar, for now. But the future is less certain. We learn from these vignettes that the issue of regional reform is not that far below the surface, and there are some who would likely push for further change under the right conditions.

Provincial Government

We have learned that the provincial government has played a crucial role in the development of smart growth in Waterloo Region. In the historical story, we learn that it has done so, as the formal regulatory framework would suggest, through its role in the planning process in Ontario, and through the various provincial policies it has put in place on planning matters, especially with respect to smart growth in the 21st century.

But we also learn that the province's role in the development of smart growth has been much more varied than an analysis that only looked at growth management policies might suggest. Most clearly, periodic provincial adventures in municipal restructuring have been closely connected to growth management concerns in the Waterloo area. In the 1960s, wanton expansion was enough to push the province to implement regional government. In the 1990s, a strengthened Region resulting from Premier Harris's reform demands was in a position to set a regional vision for smart growth.

We learn, too, that despite provincial control over municipalities and planning, the Region did not simply respond to smart growth requirements from the province. It was, rather,

seen to be leading the way, providing a model for new provincial policies and expertise for policy design. Many local decision-makers, including regional councillors, see the Region as a role model for provincial action on smart growth, as we see especially in the vignettes. In the historical story, we also see that this was not the first time the Region was at the forefront of provincial planning changes, as it implemented the first regional official plan in the province, and pioneered designations like the Environmentally Sensitive Policy Areas.

In the group story and the vignettes, we learn that this question of local leadership on provincial matters came into play for regional councillors with the decision to appeal the OMB ruling. There was a sense that provincial policies needed to be defended, and that the Region would have to do so itself. There was also tension for those who were outraged at a provincial-level tribunal overturning regional policies that supported provincial goals, and that the province seemed to be, at least initially, missing from this crucial battle over its goals for the Greater Golden Horseshoe.

Thus the involvement of the province, whether seen as direction, interference, or inexcusable absence, is never far from the politics of planning in Waterloo Region, even while local planning efforts have been seen as exemplars at the provincial level.

Political Leadership

We have learned that political leadership mattered on these files. Chair Ken Seiling plays a prominent role in all of these stories, and in the minds of those who deal with these policy issues in Waterloo Region. These policies have been significantly driven by the actions of a man whose beliefs are contextualized by a keen and ever-present sense of the long view.

But we have learned that his leadership, despite its iconic status, was not alone. In the vignettes, we learn that by the time Seiling was forced to step away from the LRT debate, at the

crucial moment, most of his colleagues had come to believe in its vision, albeit in their own ways and for their own reasons.

We also learn that the formal committee chairs play important informal organizing roles on regional council, and that those roles were important in decisions to defend the Region's smart growth plans during the 2010 to 2014 council. In practice, Seiling has shared leadership with the committee chairs, as they exercise their informal executive committee functions. It was Jim Wideman, chair of Planning and Works, who would be the face of the project in Seiling's absence, and who would work behind the scenes to try to secure the support of his colleagues for the project at the crucial moment in 2011. The other chairs would play important roles in solving the money dilemma to get the project going. And Wideman's reluctance to appeal the OMB ruling, and subsequent insistence on simultaneously pursuing a negotiated settlement, was likely influential in the eventual decision to settle with the developers.

We have also learned from the historical story that political leadership in the Region of Waterloo has changed as regional government has changed. Ken Seiling himself was in a more independent position once he was directly elected across the region, giving him added legitimacy at a crucial moment when smart growth was first on the agenda in Ontario. The direct election of regional councillors was part of the impetus for the strengthened committee chair roles, and the largely opaque but highly influential roles that those heading regional council's three committees in the 21st century would play, particularly with respect to smart growth, LRT, and the official plan.

In the Waterloo case, explaining political leadership requires more than examination of the head of council, despite his unarguably crucial role. It requires consideration of how diverse councillors were brought on board with smart growth goals, and of how formal and informal

leadership arose and functioned with respect to these policy issues. Leadership on smart growth in Waterloo Region has been a team effort.

Landowner and Business Interests

We have learned that the establishment of growth management policies by the Region of Waterloo has required an ongoing and careful renegotiation of relationships with various business interests.

Most obviously, this includes landowners and greenfield developers. In the historical story, we learn that efforts to shape where and how urban expansion could occur in the Region has always affected landowners' material interests. The Region has a long history, going back to the creation of its first Environmentally Sensitive Policy Areas in the first Regional Official Policies Plan in 1976, of dealing with these kinds of interests by providing structured opportunities for comment and managing disagreement by addressing landowner concerns on a case-by-case basis. Focusing discussion on specific plots of land with specific interested parties is a longstanding strategy to manage conflict over planning policy at the regional level.

A similar process was taken with the most recent Regional Official Plan, which was based on the Regional Growth Management Strategy. Still, a number of developers with various greenfield properties challenged the broader features of the Region's plan and its specific implementation. When it seemed they had won a considerable victory at the Ontario Municipal Board, regional council pushed back.

Yet in doing so, as we learn from the group story, they did not abandon business interests. Overwhelmingly, the business community had passionately pushed for the LRT, often for the downtown redevelopment it would encourage. Thus, councillors' beliefs about the importance of smart growth led them to stand up against developer challenges, but in doing so, they did not

have to oppose most of the business community. They could stand with the broadest part of it while pushing back against a subset whose immediate interests were not being served.

As noted in Part III, in the vignettes we get a taste of how different councillors describe the way they understand and manage their relationships with developers, in the context of their own webs of beliefs. Despite the limited level of candor possible on such a sensitive topic, the vignettes suggest that a number of these politicians are used to explaining and justifying the way that they manage relationships with developers, knowing that those relationships are under considerable scrutiny. Some acknowledge, through their criticism of always unnamed other politicians who were not so careful, that these relationships are well deserving of scrutiny, perhaps more than they generally get.

But generally, as we learn from the vignettes, these politicians all see some role, and an important one, for regional government in managing growth, and in restricting and directing what developers can build and when. As we learn from the group story, this belief in council's legitimate role helped regional council to reject the OMB's insistence that it was better placed to make planning decisions for Waterloo Region.

We have also learned that business and investment are significant reasons behind the push for smart growth. In the historical story, it was a key goal of the Regional Growth Management Strategy to curtail expansion on the west side of the urban complex while securing and servicing crucial industrial lands on the east side. It was a key goal of the LRT, in creating liveable urban communities with an inviting and reliable transportation network that would be attractive for those considering doing business in the region. In the vignettes, councillors both for and against regional amalgamation highlight the need to streamline business access to local

government, either through the recent creation of the Waterloo Region Economic Development Corporation or through a single-tier amalgamation.

Thus, while council has been willing over the decades, and most recently with the Regional Official Plan, to fend off challenges from certain business interests, it has generally been in favour of broader plans to ensure economic development and the land use plans to encourage it. Making and keeping business happy has not been sidelined in the Region's growth management plans. It has been centred.

Political Pressure

Throughout the three stories, we have learned that political pressure has been important on the question of smart growth in Waterloo Region.

In the historical story, we learn that the Region has often managed opposition to growth management rules and environmental protections by dealing with landowner concerns on a case-by-case basis, with the effect of isolating remaining opponents and limiting their effectiveness. We also learn that landowner opposition to planning changes like the introduction of Environmentally Sensitive Landscapes have been balanced by pressure from environmental and other community groups in favour of their implementation.

In the group story, we learn that who is speaking and what they are saying matters. On LRT, a broad coalition of community members, non-profit organizations and business groups were in favour of the project, and invoked themes that reinforced both the beliefs regional council held about the LRT project and its role in growth management. Opponents, in contrast, focused on the financial dilemma, which politicians had the opportunity to resolve by tweaking their financial arrangements. Opponents did not speak significantly about the broader smart growth goals that the LRT project aimed to serve. The public opinion dilemma, therefore, could

be resolved with reference to at least split public opinion, and with the importance of their belief in smart growth tipping the scales in favour of the project.

On the OMB appeal, vocal public support was almost exclusively in favour of appealing, in order to support the Region's smart growth goals and local plans against interference from a provincial tribunal. Council did not have to face public opposition to their decision to appeal.

In the vignettes, we see the varied ways that elected officials responded to public concerns about the LRT project and the different options they see for responding to various kinds of public pressure. Brenda Halloran saw opponents as reflecting the will of "Ma and Pa Waterloo," whom she had a duty to protect from government and its experts, while supporters were not seen as part of that group. Other councillors thought that it was possible to explain the project to angry residents, with some finding that their efforts significantly softened opposition from those who were angry. These responses underlie different beliefs about how public opinion should operate as part of the role of regional councillor in this representative democratic context.

We also see, in Parts II and III, how incumbent councillors chose to manage public opinion on LRT during elections. Most, but not all, promised to reconsider the LRT decision, and they have various ways of describing the relevance of that choice and, in most cases, their decision to proceed with the project a second time. Some described uncertainty about what vociferous opposition would mean for their chances at re-election in 2014, as well, particularly given the setup of election financing rules and the appearance of some well-funded anti-LRT campaigns. In the end, none of them lost their seats over the LRT project.

We also learn, more generally, that regional councillors report they rarely hear from residents about growth management issues in their capacity as regional councillors. As we might expect from Part I, regional councillors are somewhat insulated by the two-tier system that gives

them responsibility for the broad visions of planning without any of the neighbourhood level site-specific conflicts. While some report hearing from landowners who wanted their lands included in the future urban area during the Regional Official Plan process, most neighbourhood planning issues are dealt with by the area municipalities. Beyond matters of jurisdiction or even planning policy itself, there is a widely shared belief that most residents do not know what regional government does, and see their local mayor and councillor as the representatives to whom their concerns should be directed, regardless of the issue. Thus, the directly elected regional councillors are somewhat insulated from the day-to-day political pressure faced by their area municipal counterparts on neighbourhood issues like intensification. Those making smart growth policies at the regional level are not on the front lines of the conflicts over implementing them in existing neighbourhoods.

Relationships

We have learned that growth management politics in Waterloo Region has been shaped by relationships. These go back as far as the earliest parts of the historical narrative in Part I, when, for example, Bill Thomson of Kitchener rubbed some people the wrong way in the quickly annexing townships. But relationships extend through particular historical fights to the people on the ground today who are stuck with each other even when their beliefs and goals are at odds.

In one prominent example, we see the ongoing conflicts over Cambridge's role in the region between Ken Seiling and Doug Craig. They were at odds in the 1990s municipal restructuring fights. They were at odds with respect to the specific dilemmas that regional council faced over how Cambridge was being treated in the LRT project, having been left out of

the first phase. And yet they must co-exist and often work together, as they attempt to negotiate fractious pasts in the face of new challenges.

While some relationships are characterized by persistent conflict, more are primarily characterized by respect brought from long service in each other's company. As can be seen in Claudette Millar's posthumous vignette, peppered with recollections from her former colleagues, relationships among regional councillors are often characterized by extraordinary length. Despite periodic disagreements and difficult times, these relationships have mostly happened within the ordinarily productive environment of regional council. A general level of respect seems to underlie most politics at the Region of Waterloo, including smart growth politics. Relationships are part of why it is said that "Waterloo Region is the region that works."

Smart Growth

Across these three stories, we have learned that smart growth means different things to different people, and that this can indeed be an advantage of smart growth approaches.

In the historical story, we learn that the timing of the popularity of smart growth in an Ontario context coincided with changes to regional government that allowed advocates like Ken Seiling to advance smart growth goals. These changes also strengthened regional councillors' regional vantage point, allowing them to consider smart growth goals at a truly regional scale.

We also learn that the shiny vision of smart growth facilitated buy-in across both tiers of government in response to the Regional Growth Management Strategy. This vision motivated smart growth actions in defence of the RGMS that were not formally required by the plan itself, building a much broader coalition invested in promoting and defending the RGMS's smart growth trajectory in a variety of projects at a variety of levels.

In the group story, we learn that the nebulous concept of smart growth was a key concept in the LRT debate that was used by supporters and not by opponents. Broad support for smart growth goals allowed broad support for the Regional Official Plan when it was challenged by developers and then by the OMB itself. Supporters did not have to understand the technical details of the land budget to be in support of the Region's broad smart growth vision.

In the vignettes, we learn that there was broad acceptance of smart growth by the different councillors. But in talking about their support for smart growth, they highlight different things. Individual councillors might care more about agriculture, or urban placemaking, or transportation, or intensification. Acceptance of smart growth goals does not preclude concerns, or even fear, about the implications of the policies they promote under a smart growth banner, such as more dense neighbourhoods. But all of these councillors continue to profess support for smart growth goals and the broad ideas behind it, even and especially when they disagree on the particulars.

As noted in Chapter 2, this can be smart growth's strength and its weakness, as a great many things can be justified in its name. In the Waterloo case, the broad umbrella of smart growth has fit many people with varied beliefs under it.

This section has reviewed the main findings of this project about smart growth in Waterloo Region. It highlights how each of the three types of stories enables different kinds of insights about the crucial themes and issues woven through them. It complements the three stories by bringing together their different insights by theme, and allowing us to reflect finally on what we have learned from these three different perspectives. Taken together, these three stories provide a robust account of smart growth in Waterloo Region.

Smart Growth in Waterloo Region?

> As beliefs pass from generation to generation, so each cohort adapts and extends the themes linking the beliefs. Although we should be able to trace a historical line from the start of a tradition to its current finish, the changes introduced by successive generations might even result in beginning and end having nothing in common apart from the links over time.[2]

– Bevir and Rhodes, *Governance Stories*

I began this dissertation by highlighting Councillor Strickland's early concern about the region's two-tier system, and whether the area municipalities would actually implement the Region's smart growth plans on the ground. While there has been substantial buy-in to the Region's smart growth plans at the area municipal level, his question is, at this stage, yet to be fully answered. While early signs are encouraging, it will be a decade or two at least before it is clear how well the intensification goals are being met in the urban municipalities, particularly in core areas where conflicts are starting to emerge over the changing character of low-density core neighbourhoods.

But there is also uncertainty about whether decision-makers will continue to hold beliefs that support smart growth. Those who have recently championed smart growth around the regional council table have had longstanding ties to Waterloo Region, and for many, to the agricultural roots and practices of southern Ontario. Regional council's membership has been quite stable over the last few decades. And the Region of Waterloo has never had an elected chair who was not Ken Seiling. The tradition evident in these pages has been closely guarded and developed by a group of people who have had, in almost all cases, 40 years of inculcation into the tradition of regional government and growth management in the Waterloo area. Many of them have also been active in enacting and modifying that tradition.

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[2] Ibid., 8.

Will the tradition of smart growth that has developed in Waterloo Region pass to future generations of decision-makers? It is impossible to say. From a philosophical standpoint, Bevir and Rhodes maintain that situated agency means that any part of a tradition is open to change, as its adherents modify their beliefs to respond to various dilemmas. From a political standpoint, we do not know who will fill the seats currently held by smart growth advocates as they retire, or whether those in the development industry or affluent low-density neighbourhoods will decide it is in their interest to work to fill the resulting vacuum with politicians who share their beliefs.

Thus these stories show both the strength of this tradition and its fragility. Despite the relative success of smart growth in Waterloo Region, we cannot take its future for granted. Decades from now, this tradition may look a lot like it does now. Or it may become almost unrecognizable. This uncertainty suggests there will be future political disputes over these questions, just as there have been past ones. But the particulars of those disputes remain to be seen.

Yet, as Bevir and Rhodes say, "To accept agency is … to imply people have the capacity to adopt beliefs and actions, even novel ones, for reasons of their own."[3] This capacity, of course, can be used for anything. It is fair to speculate, however, that there will continue to be people using their agency to fight for smart growth in Waterloo Region, just as some others will continue to fight against it. As has been the case for the last 50 years of growth management politics in Waterloo Region, these fights will be worth watching.

A Different Way to Study Social Phenomena and the Policy Process

This project suggests a different way of studying social phenomena in complex cases that can complement existing approaches in political science.

[3] Ibid., 5.

This approach does not provide simple, unidirectional causal explanations for policy decisions. Instead, based on Bevir and Rhodes's philosophical framework, it explains actions by placing them in the context of webs of beliefs, which are influenced by traditions and which situated agents can modify in novel ways in response to dilemmas. From this, we can see how a regional councillor might make decisions that are connected to decisions that were made decades before they entered public life, while making those decisions their own.

This approach is particularly valuable in cases that invoke complex questions of conditional connections and interests. First, as Bevir and Rhodes explain, "Conditional connections exist when the nature of one object draws on the nature of another. They condition each other, so they do not have an arbitrary relationship. Equally, the one does not follow from the other, so they do not have a necessary relationship."[4] For them, "We uncover a conditional connection when we see why certain beliefs went together."[5] In this case, as noted above, regional government and growth management in the Waterloo area are conditionally connected.

Second, many approaches to the study of growth management politics in urban environments do not significantly problematize interests of the actors involved. But Bevir and Rhodes highlight that "we cannot assume that people in any given social location will come to hold certain beliefs or assume certain interests," because "their beliefs, including their view of their interests, will depend on their prior theories."[6]

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[4] Bevir and Rhodes, *The State as Cultural Practice*, 78.

[5] Mark Bevir, *The Logic of the History of Ideas* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 270, http://www.library.yorku.ca/eresolver/?id=1262311.

[6] Bevir and Rhodes, *The State as Cultural Practice*, 44.

The approach I have taken here, then, can do two things that must be done together: it can seriously examine conditional connections while also seriously addressing the fact that the interests of specific people cannot be assumed based on social facts about them.

Using this approach, I have told three kinds of stories from three different perspectives, focusing on tradition, dilemmas, and webs of beliefs. We can connect historical narratives, such as the one in Part I, and narratives that examine an individual's web of beliefs, such as the ones in Part III, with on-the-ground assessments of the politics of the day, such as the ones in Part II. We can look at the specific issues of the day by considering whether they form dilemmas for decision-makers, in the context in which those decisions are made.

While this approach is useful, broadly, for political scientists and others who study social phenomena, it is particularly useful for studies of the policy process. With this project, I suggest we need strategies to connect historical policy processes with the beliefs and actions of specific situated agents facing specific policy decisions.

In scholarly and research contexts, this approach both expands and focuses the study of the policy process. It expands the study of the policy process because it can use the concept of tradition to provide a new way of seeing how institutions can matter to specific policy outcomes, and for placing current policy questions in an institutionally-oriented historical context.

At the same time, it focuses the study of the policy process because it focuses analysis of that historical context through the specific situated agents who enact it in policy practice. While it is common in policy studies to consider the role of ideas and networks, we can find new ways to explain what these actually mean to the relevant decision-makers. Too often, we explain the decisions politicians make without even asking them about them. We need ways of conducting micro-level analysis that do not reduce the complexity of situated agents to their constituent

parts. To adequately explain policy outcomes, we need ways to connect decisions to the webs of beliefs of policymakers.

For policy practitioners and community advocates, this approach is no less valuable. Speaking coherently about long-term policy objectives to long-term policymakers requires understanding the complex institutional history that today still permeates and animates the web of beliefs of those policymakers and others who are involved in various aspects of the policy process.

At the same time, as advocates and practitioners often find, understanding this history and the politics of its various strands is not enough. It is not possible to predict where someone will stand based solely on objective facts about them. Knowing that someone represents Cambridge in the Region, for example, will not tell you what they think that means for the LRT project that starts in Kitchener and Waterloo. Practitioners must be prepared to engage with and respond to the diverse webs of beliefs of policymakers, and to see policymakers as multifaceted people who may make their decision based on factors that might never be on the radar of those focused on the policy itself.

Politicians are where government policy and democracy come together, or at least, where they are supposed to come together. They are the ones elected to represent their constituents, and make decisions on their behalf. Explaining how and why they do so is crucial to understanding democracy in action. This approach can be used to connect historical context to decision-makers and their beliefs, and thus to increase both scholarly and public understanding of how major policies are set, modified, and continued over time in representative democracies.

Interpretive Intuitionalism and Narrative Methods

This approach may leave methodological purists on both the interpretivist side and the institutionalist side feeling somewhat unsatisfied. For the interpretivists, my analysis gives too much a priori weight to institutions as a more meaningful component of tradition than others. For the institutionalists, my analysis gives too much consideration to the contingency of specific individuals and their diverse webs of beliefs.

Yet given recent advances and variation in both interpretive and institutionalist approaches, now is the time to ask: is a meaningfully interpretive institutionalism possible? This question cannot reasonably be answered with one study, particularly one designed primarily to explain specific policy outcomes. But if an interpretive institutionalism is possible, albeit philosophically imperfect, I would suggest that it may well look like this study. It may be that the philosophical and epistemological gap between interpretivism and institutionalism cannot be fully bridged through abstract theory, but only in research practice.

Beyond these grand methodological disputes, I hope that this work will contribute to a surging interest in narrative research methods that can be seen in some political science subfields and other disciplines. If we accept, as my methodology requires me to, that what we and all researchers do is tell competing stories, then we have a renewed opportunity to consider how we tell those stories, with what other stories, and for what purposes.

The tripartite construction I have used here is one I have chosen for my purposes, given my topic and my goals. For certain case studies, telling different kinds of stories, as I have done here, can help to triangulate between different standpoints on complex, multi-decade policy questions. We need not choose between taking historical, group, and individual accounts seriously. We can tell stories that meaningfully explore these different standpoints without

forcing them to conform fully to each other. The result can be a robust and multi-layered academic account, like this one, that not only acknowledges but also embraces both continuity and contradiction.

Yet other academic research that is not suited to this kind of construction may be suited to various narrative approaches. Even those researchers who do not agree with the methodological premise that all research is storytelling can choose to tell a story. And accepting storytelling as a legitimate means of academic writing opens up a much broader set of narrative choices that can appeal to both academic and non-academic audiences. This project, and particularly Part III, adds to a diverse and growing body of narrative social science research that shows that academic writing can be both rigorous and broadly interesting. After all, most social scientists study people. We tell funders that we study them because they are important, and they are. But deep down, we study them because they are fascinating. Our readers need not be left out of our enthusiasm.

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