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10

Direction-Setting

> More often than not a community relies on its planner to search for and articulate its aspirations. . . . Without clear goals, problem identification is no more than a statement of "existing conditions" without any sense of why these conditions constitute a problem.
>
> —Leung 1989, 27

The purpose of direction-setting is to provide a clear, relevant basis for plan-making and later for evaluation and decision-making (Smith and Hester 1982; Vogel and Swanson 1988). It should enable the community to take control of its agenda and consciously orient it to long-range public interests rather than shorter-range issues and private ones. It should require officials, planners, and citizens to break out of their normal routine and away from incremental decision-making.

More specifically, we see direction-setting as helping planners, elected officials, appointed officials, and the community do three things: (1) understand current and emerging conditions; (2) determine goals to be pursued and issues to be addressed; and (3) formulate general principles to guide both further planning and day-to-day development management decisions. Three components of the policy framework plan emerge from direction-setting and parallel those three purposes.

1. A *fact component* describes existing and projected conditions indicating the relative seriousness of problems or degree of goal attainment and factors causing or otherwise contributing to problems, goal attainment, and land development.
2. A *values component* states goals, concerns, or issues, and priorities among them.
3. A *policies component* describes principles to guide planning, problem solving, and development management and setting priorities among issues and policies.

The three products of direction-setting may be assembled into a single policy framework and adopted formally. Alternatively, they may be separate reports, separately considered by elected officials and planning agencies. If there is a formal policy framework plan, later plans may simply summarize and refer to it. However, if the analysis of conditions, goals, and policies are produced and adopted in pieces, the planner should anticipate incorporating them into the land classifica-

tion and/or land use design plan as described in following chapters. In either case they should be adopted in order to have legal and political standing as guides to development permit decisions, capital investments, and other local government decisions, as well as to problem solving and further plan-making.

Figure 10-1 diagrams the relationship among the three components of the policy framework plan and between that framework and later plans, problem solving, and land use management activities. Although we discuss fact-finding before goal-setting, the planner usually carries out these tasks somewhat concurrently. The investigation of conditions and causes reveals and elaborates on problems and otherwise feeds information to goal-setting, but at the same time the determination of community concerns, values, and priorities helps determine which facts and problems are relevant.

Initiating the advance planning process with direction-setting implies a ratio-

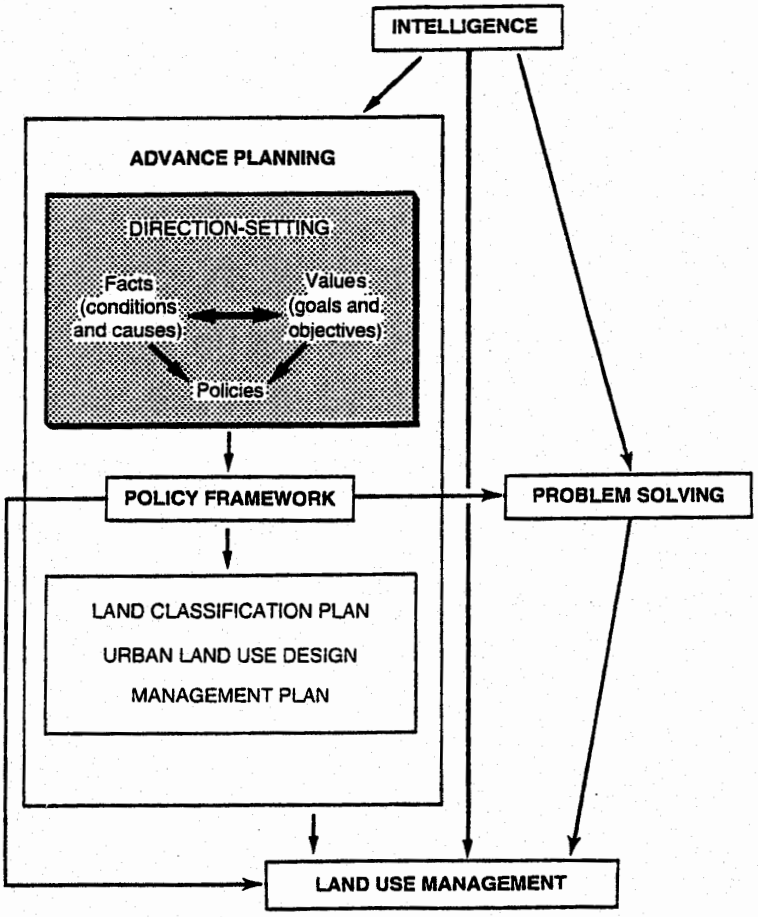

Figure 10-1. The Role of Direction-Setting in Advance Planning. The three components of direction-setting and its policy framework output are shown, along with their relationships to problem solving, land use management, and further stages of advance planning.

nal planning philosophy. That is, it assumes that ends should determine means and that planning is best initiated by defining the problem and setting a target. Feasibility is introduced later and is secondary to correctly specifying the problem and setting goals.

Participation is especially relevant to the direction-setting stage in advance planning. The validity, usefulness, and effectiveness of the output depends on the process being open to all individuals and groups that can affect or are affected by the land use management system and the future land use pattern. Thus, although the planner coordinates the process, it involves elected and appointed officials of the government as well neighborhood groups, civic groups, special interest groups, and general citizens. Those who have something at stake must be able to participate with a full awareness of their interests and have sufficient power to assure representativeness and equity in outcomes. For those reasons, we include techniques for facilitating participation in our approach.

In conjunction with participation, the process relies on several other resources: adequate and accessible information; a capability to query that database; and the "ordinary" knowledge brought to the process by elected officials, appointed officials, and other participants. Those elements are necessary for practical and effective discourse about problems, needs, aspirations, priorities, and alternative policies.

The Fact Component: Analysis of Relevant Conditions

The fact component of a plan can also be referred to as situational or environment assessment, fact-finding or findings of fact, problem analysis, scanning, analysis of relevant conditions, or information base. Whatever the terminology, facts have three ways to be relevant. First, some facts are relevant to goals. That is, they pertain to observations, assumptions, inferences, and deductions about problems, needs, and goal conditions. For example, facts may describe the number of dwellings in a floodplain. Second, other facts are relevant because they pertain to causal factors that bear on those problems, needs, and goal conditions. For example, the amount of land that has available public sewerage and is outside the floodplain bears upon how much development pressure exists in the floodplain. A third type of fact is relevant to the feasibility or effectiveness of potential solutions. Such facts may be about legal, political, and financial limits of the local government, or relations with neighboring governments, for example. All three types of facts should be in the analysis of existing and emerging conditions.

Facts differ along other dimensions, too. Some facts are observable and refer to past or present conditions. Other facts, however, are projected future conditions. Some are internal to the community, and some (such as the regional economy) are external but affect the community's present and future nevertheless. Some are directly controllable; they are sometimes referred to as policy facts or as de facto development policy. Others are not controllable but affect future con-

ditions nevertheless and need to be considered in designing policy. Some facts derive from scientific knowledge, contributed mostly by planners and other professionals. Other equally relevant facts derive from ordinary knowledge, as opposed to scientific knowledge, and derive from personal experience, observation, and discussions with others.

In addition to information about conditions related to goals, causal factors, and feasibility, the fact component includes an explicit or implicit model of relationships between conditions and their causes or related conditions. The fact component should state whether and how conditions are related to other conditions, either as different facets of the same problem or as cause-effect. Planners' models of this structure of situations are based on scientific method to the extent possible. That is, they are based on formal processes of model specification, calibration, and testing by means of statistical analysis as discussed in chapter 4. But they are also based on theory and on ordinary knowledge.

The fact component of direction-setting contributes to planning in several ways. First, a clear picture of the situation helps determine issues and goals and priorities among them. Second, a sound analysis of conditions and causes contributes to finding good solutions. Third, a sound fact basis will help a plan stand up to legal and political challenges to implementation.

Determining the Scope and Focus of the Problem Analysis

There are two approaches to fact-finding and problem analysis. In the first, the planner explores and interprets conditions and relationships revealed in the information system. He or she is an independent analyst who identifies, clarifies, and quantifies existing and emerging problem conditions about which the community may be unaware or only faintly aware. The planner in this role is a scientific prophet who calls attention to facts about current conditions, trends, and likely future conditions. In strategic planning this track is referred to as scanning the external and internal environment to identify key factors and trends and determine how external forces will likely influence events for the community. The facts serve as inputs to goal-setting by apprising participants of present and emerging conditions and their implications.

In the second approach, the planner uses the participatory goal-setting results (discussed later in the chapter) to focus the analysis of facts. In this approach, the information system is used to clarify and quantify conditions related to those problems, needs, and aspirations identified by goal-setting participants. In other words, the relationship between facts and goals is reversed; goals define the scope and focus of the fact-finding task. The two approaches are not mutually exclusive and can be used in complementary fashion.

The analysis usually covers population and the economy and their implicit future demand for land and environmental resources, current uses of land and trends in land development, trends and conditions in the natural and built environment, capacity and condition of community facilities, regulations and incentives of the

current land use management system, land supply for new development and redevelopment, federal and state policy directives and constraints, local governmental resources, and political factors.

Because advance planning is future-oriented, projected or possible future conditions are an important aspect of the fact component. Future conditions are represented through forecasting and scenario-building. Forecasting applies particularly to factors and conditions that are more or less foreseeable and can be estimated with projection techniques, such as ratios, extrapolation, and simulation (chapters 5 and 6). Scenario-building, on the other hand is a more exploratory representation of alternative futures that could, or in a normative sense perhaps even should, occur (Morrison, Renfro, and Boucher 1983). Scenario construction or writing sometimes uses participatory techniques. The participants might include professionals within the local government, experts in relevant fields from outside government, or elected and appointed officials—people who have special knowledge and perspective. Scenarios explore alternative futures, particularly in the external environment but also in the noncontrollable events within the community—for example, whether the economy will boom, grow slowly, or bust; whether tourism will continue to be the primary sector of the economy; or whether changing technology of on-site wastewater treatment will lessen dependence of development on the existence of public sewer services.

Scenarios can be used in conjunction with projection techniques to bracket the likely range of future conditions, using concepts of low end/high end projection, worst case/best case situations, or high impact/low impact possibilities.

Analyses of past, present, and emerging conditions can be published in separate reports, as separate volumes of a plan, or integrated with the goals and policies in a single report. The plan of Gresham, Oregon, is an example of both formats. First, Gresham published a separate volume called "Findings." It is a thick report, covering a comprehensive list of topics: community overview (history, regional context); the natural environment; physical environment (land supply characteristics, land use, transportation, and community infrastructure); social environment (population, labor, economic characteristics, housing, and social services); and the political environment (local government and intergovernmental organization). Appendixes contain much detail. In addition to that "Findings" report, however, Gresham includes summaries of the most salient "findings" with policies and implementation strategies in a separate summary volume, "Findings, Policies, and Implementation Strategies." For example, Table 10-2 later in this chapter illustrates such a linkage between findings, policies, and strategies.

The Values Component: Setting Goals and Priorities

Goal-setting involves identifying present and future problems, determining aspirations in the form of goals and objectives, and identifying strategic issues and priorities among them. A problem is an unsatisfactory condition, present or pro-

jected. A goal is an ideal future condition to which the community aspires. A goal is valued for itself, not as an instrument to achieve something else. It is usually expressed in general terms, using adjectives and nouns; it is usually not quantified. For example, a community might desire an esthetically pleasing downtown, high environmental quality, or equity. An objective is an intermediate step toward attaining a goal and is more tangible and specific. It is measurable and attainable. It is often time-specific, specifying attainment by the year 2000, for example. An objective may be one aspect of a larger goal. For example, water quality meeting EPA standards might be an objective under the goal of environmental quality. It may be one of several steps toward a goal; for example, reducing the number of dwellings in danger from the hundred-year flood to 450 dwellings by the year 2000, and 300 by the year 2005.

An issue is a concern about a condition or event likely to have an important impact on the ability of the community to meet its goals and where there is lack of consensus about what action to take. An issue agenda consists of higher-priority issues, calling for more or less immediate attention in the planning and governance process. For example, obsolete and undercapacity infrastructure, coupled with growth pressure, could be an issue. Thus, an issue has both problem and fact components as well as an implied aspiration component.

Five Types of Goals

Planners deal with five types of goals, which are classified by their source.

1. *Legacy goals* come from previously adopted and currently followed policy of the local government; they are a good starting point for the goal-setting process.
2. *Mandated goals,* "musts," come from state and federal policy and from the judicial system's interpretation of statutory authority and constitutional rights.
3. *Generic goals,* "oughts," come from political philosophy and the planning literature on good urban form, good land use management, and good governmental process.
4. *Needs are goals for accommodating change* and are derived from forecasts of population and economic change that must be accommodated.
5. *The community's concerns and aspirations,* "wants," are derived from a participatory goal-setting process.

The last of those five types is the most closely identified with any particular community. Those goals emerge from the participation of elected officials, appointed officials, interest groups, and citizens in the goal-setting process. They represent what the community uniquely values about itself, what should be conserved, what problems are of greatest concern, and what the ideal community of the future should represent. The other four types of goals should be considered during that participatory process, reviewed and modified, and then integrated with the community's unique goals in a coordinated statement. Figure 10-2 indicates the five

sources of community goals and the idea that they must be merged through a participatory process into a coordinated goal statement.

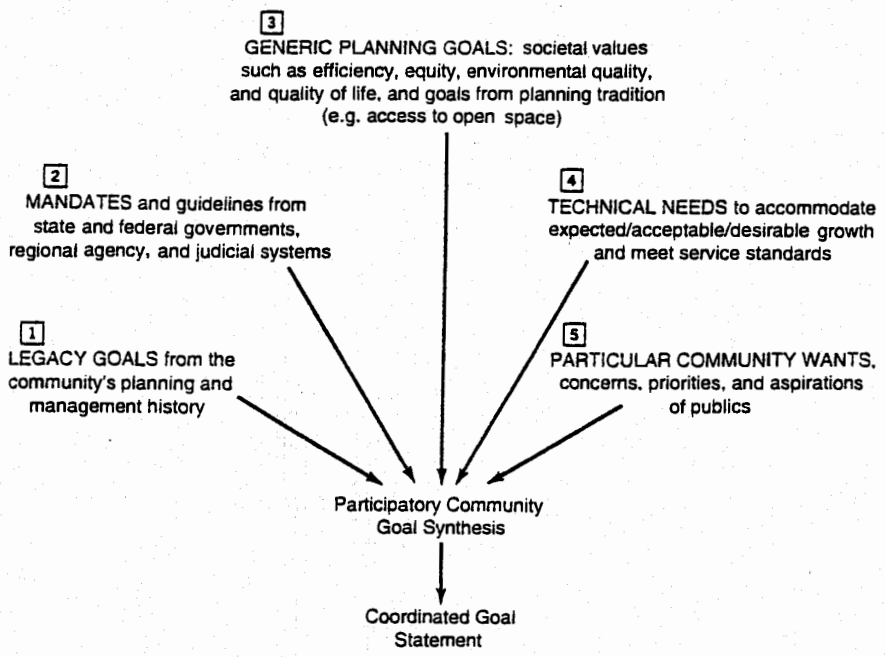

Figure 10-2. Five Sources of Community Goals. The planner has a responsibility to introduce the first four types of goals (legacy goals, mandates, generic goals, and needs) and to organize a process to add a fifth type of goal (community aspirations and concerns) and synthesize goals from all five sources.

Legacy Goals To derive legacy goals, the planner inventories goals that are explicit in current ordinances and plans and used by the local legislative body, appointed commissions, and operating departments. In addition, the planner may infer goals from patterns of past decisions by the local government. Legacy goals also come from previous stages in the current round of advance planning. For example, goals and action principles developed in the direction-setting process become goal inputs to the land use design, which in turn becomes an input to development management. Using legacy goals as a starting point simply acknowledges that every community has a history of deliberations that reflect its values and provides useful input to current goal-setting deliberations.

Mandated Goals It is also the planner's responsibility to introduce federal- and state-mandated goals and policies into the community goal-setting process. These goals come from federal and state legislation, rules, and guidelines and from court rulings interpreting constitutional rights and statutory authority. The use of the adjective *mandate* does not mean that the community cannot interpret those goals, determine priorities, and otherwise modify mandates.

Mandated goals are particularly important in a growing number of "growth-directing" states that have state goals and policies to guide local planning and land use management (chapter 1). Examples at this writing include Oregon, Florida, Hawaii, New Jersey, Vermont, Colorado, Maine, Rhode Island, Georgia, and Washington. Additional states, such as North Carolina, California, and New York mandate goals and other requirements for particular substate areas that are of statewide concern, such as coasts, wetlands, or special areas (e.g., Adirondack Park in New York). In other localities, regional plans may be binding. For example, the Twin Cities Metropolitan Council Framework plan in Minnesota imposes a regional water and sewer extension policy on local jurisdictions.

Oregon provides a good illustration of mandated goals. That state establishes nineteen statewide policy areas. Each has a mandatory part, called "goals," which has the force of law, and another, nonmandatory part, called "guidelines." The state requires each city and county to have a comprehensive plan consistent with the statewide planning goals, and local plans are reviewed for such consistency and must be state-approved. Table 10-1 illustrates some of Oregon's goals, including several planning process goals.

New Jersey introduced a "cross acceptance process" through which governments at several different levels compare and coordinate planning policies to attain compatibility among local, county, and state plans. The process is intended to respect local planning prerogatives while simultaneously establishing the need for a regional and statewide approach to meet legislative mandates and state goals. Georgia requires coordination and approval at the regional planning agency level rather than by a state agency.

State-mandated goals often emphasize issues where the action of one jurisdiction affects neighboring jurisdictions, the interests of a larger region, or the state as a whole. For example, Florida imposes state policy on development affecting such "areas of critical state concern" as wetlands and water supply sources (in a state with scarce water) and on "development of regional interest" such as lower-income housing, airports, prisons, landfills, and other forms of development that meet a regional need but that local governments often try to exclude. Development of regional interest also includes large developments, such as large shopping centers, that may benefit local jurisdictions but have negative impacts beyond the jurisdiction.

Florida establishes both a state plan with goals and policies with which local governments must be consistent and a review process for approving local plans. The state goals and policies address a large number of topics, including land use, conservation, water resources, housing, and public improvements, as well as education, economy, health, and others. The state's land use goal, for example, specifies that "development shall be directed to those areas which have in place, or have agreements to provide, the land and water resources, fiscal abilities, and service capacity to accommodate growth in an environmentally acceptable manner." State policies under that goal include establishing a system of incentives and disincentives to encourage a separation of urban and rural land uses and devel-

Table 10-1. Selected Statewide Goals Mandated for Local Planning in Oregon

I. Planning Process Goals
   1. A program that insures the opportunity for citizens to be involved in all phases of the planning process. Six components of such programs are specified: citizen involvement program, including an advisory committee, two-way communication, opportunities for citizens to influence particular steps in planning process, availability of technical information, mechanism for feedback by policymakers to citizen recommendations, and financial support.

II. Conservation Goals
   1. Preserve and maintain agricultural lands. This goal defines agricultural lands, requires all jurisdictions to inventory them, and requires local policies and zoning to preserve and maintain them.
   2. Conserve forest lands for forest uses.
   3. Conserve open space and protect natural, scenic, and historic resources. This goal names twelve types of resources, establishes a process through which resources must be inventoried and evaluated, requires local government to choose one of three alternatives—preservation, allowing more important uses to destroy the resource, or establishing a balance between those two alternatives—and requires adoption of policies and ordinances to implement that choice.

III. Development Goals
   1. Protect life and property from natural disasters and hazards.
   2. Satisfy recreation needs and provide for siting of recreation facilities.
   3. Diversify and improve the economy of the state.
   4. Provide for housing needs of citizens of the state.
   5. Develop a timely, orderly, and efficient arrangement of public facilities and services to serve as a framework for urban and rural development.
   6. Provide and encourage a safe, convenient and economic transportation system.
   7. Conserve energy.
   8. Provide for an orderly efficient transition from rural to urban land use. This goal requires cities to estimate future growth and resulting need for land and then plan and zone accordingly. It specifies seven factors that must be considered in drawing up the urban growth boundary: accommodation of population growth; need for housing, employment, and livability; orderly and economic provision for public facilities and services; maximum efficiency of land uses; environmental, energy, economic, and social consequences; protection of the best agricultural lands; and compatibility of proposed urban uses with nearby agricultural activities.

oping a system of intergovernmental negotiation for siting locally unpopular public and private land uses. Local plans must be consistent with both state goals and state policies.

Perhaps more significantly, Florida establishes minimum criteria for determination of compliance. The criteria cover process, format, and content of local plans. Public participation criteria must be met for the planning process. With respect to format, the plan must contain certain elements, meet a particular time horizon, include implementation, and designate standards for public services. With respect to policy content, the future land use element must discourage proliferation of urban sprawl, for example. Florida is unique, thus far, in requiring that local plans include a capital improvements element and service standards for public services. Public facilities necessary to maintain adopted service level standards must be available when development impacts occur (something Florida calls a concurrency requirement). In fact, a community must adopt a land use manage-

ment system that assures concurrency for roads, sanitary sewer, solid waste, drainage, potable water, parks and recreation, and mass transit (if applicable).

Judicial systems may also mandate goals defining the objectives local governments may pursue, the means they may employ, and allowable procedures for permits and other governmental decisions. Judicial mandates apply more to development control measures and practices than to land use design plans, however.

Generic Planning Goals Planning theory, political philosophy, the literature on good urban form (e.g., Lynch 1981; Jacobs and Appleyard 1987; Frank 1989; Mansfield 1990), and examples of good local plans that are recognized in the profession (e.g., award-winning plans in American Planning Association contests) all constitute a third source for community goals. Again, as is true for legacy goals and mandates from higher levels of government, it is the planner's professional responsibility to introduce and advocate generic goals, for often they reflect the interests (e.g., future generations) that the participatory process does not represent adequately.

Generic planning goals address matters of public interest and include economic efficiency, protection of constitutional rights, equity, choice, environmental quality, energy efficiency, quality of life, health and safety, effectiveness, and feasibility. They also include a valid participatory discourse for advance planning, implementation, and administration of the land use management system.

Economic efficiency means achieving maximum net economic benefit from a land use pattern, development processes, and development management measures. That is accomplished either by getting the most benefit for a given cost, finding the lowest-cost solution for a particular benefit, or getting the highest ratio of benefits to costs. With respect to the land use pattern, efficiency implies coordination of public and private development so that journeys of home-to-work, home-to-school, home-to-recreation, and home or work-to-shopping are short; industries have good access to the regional transportation network; land uses are located to be most easily served by water and sewer, transportation, and other services; and public and private operations are energy efficient. In other words, we seek a land use arrangement that is economical for the municipality to service and economically efficient for land users. It should be the case that no clearly better arrangements could provide more benefits without increasing costs, and no one could be made better off without making others worse off. With regard to land use control, efficiency implies use of measures that achieve the desired effect in the simplest manner with the least cost to government and the least interference with private choice. Efficiency in development practices means that they cause off-site nonmarket effects to be factored into development decisions. Ultimately, economic efficiency in land use means a development process, including regulations, that allocates resources to generate the highest utility.

Equity addresses the distribution of the costs and benefits of public policies. Equity is concerned with who gains and who loses. One interpretation of equity is captured in the benefit principle—those who benefit should pay the cost of

government services and other actions. Another interpretation of equity is that benefits should be distributed according to need, but costs according to the ability to pay. A third is that benefits should go to those who contribute the most effort, talent, or other resources to a project; a matching grant program follows that principle. A fourth principle of equity is equal treatment, that is, benefits and costs should be distributed equally, regardless of ability to pay, need, or contribution. Such equality of treatment is also the concept behind "social equity," that is, equal access by all to judicial justice, education, safety, housing, and employment. These often conflicting equity concepts apply to land use management measures as well as land use designs.

Procedural fairness is a fifth principle of equity, and one particularly relevant to land use management and implementation strategies. That principle implies notification of all affected parties about impending plans and development decisions, ample and equal opportunity to argue one's case, and equal protection of the law in the sense of equal treatment of all persons equally situated.

The goal of *protecting constitutional rights* implies that the land use management measures pursue legitimate objectives, use means that have reasonable and efficient relation to those objectives and are not unduly repressive, refrain from taking property without due compensation, respect interests of other governments and residents in the region, apply equally and fairly to all people in similar circumstances, and do not discriminate unfairly against groups defined by race, color, creed, or gender. The protection of such rights is a fundamental public interest in American society and strongly felt by many residents. Yet, unless the planner raises it, this goal is not likely to come up in goal-setting but arise later, when specific measures are debated or later administered, or perhaps challenged in court. Rather than wait for them to arise later or to treat them as legal constraints, it is better to perceive constitutional rights as a goal up front during the direction-setting stage of the planning process.

The goal of *choice* implies providing a wide range of densities, locations, and development types so that residents and other land users can choose places to suit their tastes and pocketbooks. Choice, with respect to land use management, implies giving the regulated person, firm, or institution some flexibility in ways to meet requirements.

Environmental quality refers to the ambient quality of air, water, land and manmade environments (such as historic neighborhoods). It implies protection from harmful agricultural, industrial, and other urban societal processes. With respect to the design of future land use patterns, environmental quality implies protecting natural features, natural processes, and critical areas by allocating compatible uses to such areas. With respect to land use management, environmental quality refers also to performance standards that land users and land developers should meet.

Quality of life is a goal that reflects the noneconomic, less tangible, and less quantifiable well-being of a community—its general welfare. We are especially interested in *community* quality of life—those aspects of well-being, such as neigh-

borhood quality or community character, that public policy affects directly—whereas many important quality of life aspects (e.g., marital harmony or friends) are not. Deteriorating quality of life is often cited as a primary reason for adoption of growth controls (Dowall 1984; Dubbink 1984). Popular books, such as *Places Rated Almanac* (Boyer and Savageau 1985) have also heightened public awareness of community quality of life issues. Quality of life can be measured by surveys asking people about their subjective well-being, particularly with neighborhood and community and public services. In contrast, the "places-rated" approach uses the weighted combination of objective indicators (e.g., Boyer and Savageau 1985; Park 1985) to indicate quality of life. Planners in Jacksonville, Florida, publish an annual "community report card" that lists seventy-four quantitative indicators of progress, a small number of which are chosen for special attention each year (Chambers 1992). Another approach uses the combination of subjective measures, along with a concept of community trends (Do you think that congestion is worse, compared to five years ago, or better?) and objective indicators (measuring congestion by actual observations of traffic and travel times) (Myers 1988).

Health and safety goals refer to health hazards and occasions for injury and to promotion of physical and emotional well-being. Regulations traditionally pursue this goal by setting minimum standards, but advance planning broadens the idea to include promoting what is desirable or even optimum, not just the minimum. Thus, planning involves not only "protection against" hazards to health and safety but also promotion of optimal living and working conditions.

Effectiveness and *feasibility* are goals that apply to development management measures. Effectiveness refers to the capability of a proposal to achieve its goal. The simple test is, Does the proposal do what it is designed to do? Does the land use design, for example, achieve the goals being pursued? Does the management system achieve the desired land use pattern? Does the implementation strategy achieve adoption and proper administration?

Feasibility, although a consideration in land use design, assumes greater salience in development management. Feasibility implies that the community is capable of carrying out a proposed plan, growth-management measure, or implementation action effectively. There are several aspects to feasibility: political feasibility (likely that officials will adopt and effectively enforce the proposal); legal feasibility (likely to withstand legal challenge in court); administrative feasibility (staff is capable of carrying out the proposed procedures); and financial feasibility (within ability of community to finance the proposal). Feasibility is not a rigid limit on what can be proposed, but a frontier to be pushed back to enlarge the realm of the possible.

Goals Representing Needs Implied by Community Change

The planner must forecast demographic and economic changes that determine "needs" for land, housing, water, transportation, schools, recreation facilities,

wastewater treatment, solid waste disposal, and other community facilities and services. Translating growth and change into needs involves application of standards, which planners propose initially as options but which are then assessed and eventually chosen in a participatory goal-setting process. Standards are not simply accepted, except for those mandated by higher authority. While the methods of making population and employment projections are covered in chapters 5 and 6, and methods for converting such projections into space requirements and community facility requirements are covered in chapters 12 through 15, the initial estimates of needs and the choice of standards are direction-setting tasks. Those needs can then be balanced against other goals and costs, which may suggest a revision in projected population and employment or an adjustment in service levels and other standards.

Concerns and Aspirations Particular to the Community: A Participatory Goal-Setting Process

This fifth type of goal represents the community's particular aspirations, concerns, and priorities. Thus, this step in goal-setting should come after the other four types of goals have been introduced, and it includes integrating them in a coordinated statement.

The planner has several roles to play in this process. One is to introduce, advocate, and employ the generic planning goals discussed earlier and to advise on needs, mandated goals, and legacy goals. Another is to facilitate and coordinate the participatory process for assessing those goals and raising community-specific concerns and aspirations.

There are three angles from which to begin the participatory goal-setting process. One place to begin is with existing and anticipated problems, that is, undesirable conditions, such as deteriorating neighborhoods, sprawl, housing in floodplains, or poor water quality in a water supply reservoir. The goal is then to alleviate the problem. That approach is particularly suited to already built-up areas such as central cities but applies to some degree in any community. Another place to begin is with aspirations, that is, ideal future conditions. That approach applies to virtually any community—central city, growing suburb, or new community. It asks, essentially, What do we want to become? A third place to begin is with the array of legacy goals, mandates, generic planning goals, and projected needs. All three starting points are valid. And they are not mutually exclusive; all three are often used in conjunction.

The citizen participation movement that took hold in the 1960s often focused on participatory goal-setting. Participatory goal-setting faded in the 1970s with the decline of federal aid and its requirement for citizen participation. As critical planning theory caught hold in the 1980s, participatory goal-setting received renewed emphasis. Florida, for example, has enacted the Visions 2000 Act of 1986 (chapter 86-221), which provides funding to "encourage counties and municipalities to establish committees which will provide a forum to facilitate

discussion of and community consensus about a direction for the future of the county or municipality. . . . such committees shall formulate goals and develop comprehensive short-term, intermediate-term, and long-term policies for achieving such goals. . . . it is intended to provide public statements of goals and policies reflecting the desires and will of the people" (cited in Vogel and Swanson 1988, 48–49).

The ideal participatory goal-setting process includes several steps—search, synthesis, and selection (Nutt and Backoff 1987). Search focuses on generating information and ideas. Synthesis focuses on finding patterns and themes and on improving understanding. Selection stresses the winnowing of ideas and the setting of priorities among goals, themes, and issues. It is the planner's task to help incorporate participatory techniques into a goal-setting process that covers all three steps: search, synthesis, and selection. Although some participatory techniques are particularly well suited to one of the steps, others can be used for several or all three steps. Techniques can also be combined to form a hybrid approach that covers all three steps.

Search Several techniques are especially suited to uncovering and elaborating ideas in the search step. They include interacting groups, silent reflective techniques, surveys, focus groups, and dialectic groups (Nutt and Backoff 1987, 52–53). The techniques of interacting groups emphasize face-to-face format and free-flowing, open-ended discussion. In brainstorming, one such technique, the planner keeps challenging the group to generate and modify ideas while postponing valuative judgments and criticisms (which tend to inhibit creative idea generation) (Osborn 1963).

Silent reflection techniques require each participant to identify goals, problems, and issues before group discussion begins. The intent is to avoid domination by more assertive people and to overcome barriers to candor and creativity by less assertive members. In the nominal group technique, for example, the participants first reflect silently; then they take turns revealing ideas (one idea per person per turn) until everybody's have been listed. Then participants discuss the ideas as a group to share judgments, improve understanding, make modifications, and consolidate the list. Finally, they rank the ideas individually and pool those rankings into a group ranking. (Delbacq and Van de Ven 1971) In brainwriting, sheets of paper with nominations for problems, goals, and issues are put in a central location in the room. A participant takes a sheet, adds his or her ideas, puts the sheet back, then takes another sheet returned by another member, and so on. Participants can add more ideas on fresh sheets, continuing until the ideas and comments (and participants) are exhausted (Gueschka, Shaude, and Schlicksupp 1975). As in the nominal group technique, participants take turns describing one idea at a time from lists, the group discusses and elaborates the ideas, and then assigns priorities by vote. In a variation called the nominal-interacting technique (Nutt and Backoff 1987), the nominal group or brainwriting approach is interrupted

periodically to allow lobbying, perhaps during a thirty-minute break for refreshments, where participants can share opinions, exchange facts, challenge the views of others, and bargain.

Survey approaches, another search method, gather ideas and opinions by telephone, mail, or with representatives of reference groups without group interaction. They can be used alone to provide a barometer of opinion or as a reference point for an interactive group. In the Delphi technique (Dalkey 1972), the planner uses a series of questionnaires with a selective group of respondents. The first questionnaire solicits ideas and opinions and asks reasons behind them. Subsequent questionnaires collate the ideas and associated rationales, perhaps adding new information, and then feed them back to the group, without identifying authors of ideas and arguments, to set the stage for reconsidered responses. Each panel member reviews the logic behind the arguments of others and modifies his or her own arguments, opinions, and priorities in responding anew to the questionnaire. The process continues through several rounds until sufficient consensus is reached. Voting assigns priorities in the end.

In focus groups, outside experts describe opportunities and alternative aspirations and strategies to small groups of direction-setting participants selected to represent a cross-section of the population or particular sectors of the population. Ideas are presented to provoke discussion of values and choices and to assess the degree of support for the various positions and goals.

Synthesis For the synthesis step, there are yet other approaches, although the methods above do include a degree of synthesis. The planner might turn to the snowball technique, relevance trees, or policy capturing. These techniques are particularly useful for identifying patterns, themes, and generalizations from ideas produced by the search step. The snowball technique (Greenblat and Duke 1981) is a way to find labels that identify themes or generalizations to sum up ideas that come out of the search process in relatively unorganized form. Index cards are prepared, one idea to a card. Members attach the cards to a wall, group similar ideas, and then label the groups. Anyone can change any label or exchange cards among categories, merge categories, or create new groups and labels without discussion. Stable patterns often emerge that capture a synthesis or pattern. In the tree structure technique (Warfield 1976), participants use a paired comparison ranking technique to create a hierarchy of levels, and then subdivisions within the levels. Connections among levels show the relationships among goals, problems, and issues, perhaps identifying whether the relationship is causal or an order of priority/severity. In the paired comparison technique, each participant compares each idea with all other ideas on the list, inferring an overall order. The planner counts how many members judged an item to be more severe or of higher priority. By looking for patterns among the rankings, the planner and group might develop subdivisions within levels. After an initial ranking by participants and summary by the planner, the group can discuss the resulting structure and add

more observations. The paired comparison procedure can then be repeated so that the ranking and subdivisions reflect more and more informed discussion.

Selection In the selection step, the planner may employ additional techniques, such as the estimate-discuss-estimate technique or Q-sort. In the estimate-discuss-estimate technique (Nutt and Backoff 1987, 55), participants make a preliminary estimate of priorities and nominate ideas to be dropped. Then reflection, discussion, and perhaps more searching for additional information focus on the tentative choices before a final determination is made. This can be considered a simplification of the Delphi technique.

Q-sort (Kerlinger 1973) is used when the list of items to be organized and selected is very long. Individuals first look for the most important, then the least important, item, switching back and forth until all the items have been categorized. The individual participants' orders of priority are then merged to form a group listing. Priorities can also be determined by rank weighting or other similar approaches.

There are several styles of participatory goal-setting: anticipatory democracy, the American assembly, and strategic planning. Anticipatory democracy emphasizes the value of the *process* over the content of the results. What counts most is not defining specific goals but the creation of a decision process in which all goals, no matter whose, are regularly reevaluated in the light of changing conditions. It is seen as a way to increase consciousness about the future of the community and increase popular participation and feedback.

The American assembly approach, on the other hand (Vogel and Swanson 1988) stresses attainment of consensus on the *content* of problems, goals, and policy as a common vision of the future. It focuses on a restricted agenda, a limited number of participants, and a limited time schedule. The participants isolate themselves for a brief period and produce a final report that represents the general group consensus.

Strategic planning, a third and more recent approach, (Sorkin et al. 1984; Bryson and Roering 1987; Bryson and Einsweiler 1988) limits participation to an even smaller group of citizens, focusing on reaching consensus by leaders in the private and public sectors. It emphasizes a concern for action and practical results. It begins with a scanning of the key factors and trends in external forces and an assessment of resources, strengths, and weaknesses of the community as bases for determining feasibility. It also emphasizes the selection of a few critical issues to focus upon, and in that sense is not comprehensive. Nevertheless, to the extent that we seek a planning process that extends to action, strategic planning can be an appropriate approach, particularly if the participants are fully representative of the community.

Participatory techniques must be applied through some group, and the selection of that group is significant. Some techniques are employed in interactive groups, which must be relatively small (e.g., committees, task forces, councils, and boards). Other techniques can apply to larger and less organized groups (e.g.,

public hearings and town hall forums). Other techniques might use the media (articles, notices, interviews and talk shows, presentations, newspaper supplements, and press releases) or surveys to reach the public at large.

Whatever the approach used, the validity and usefulness of goal-setting is threatened when it is not achieved through representative participation. One threat is that the results do not achieve commitment from important parts of the community. The other threat is that representation is flawed and an unrepresentative group engages in goal-setting in the name of the whole community. For the public interest to be served, the process must be under government or joint government-civic group ownership and broadly representative. Community goal-setting should be structured to assure that selected private groups do not control the public agenda for their own private interests. Leaders and citizens should be brought together in a way that gets them to put the interests of the larger community ahead of their own narrower interests. The mechanisms must focus attention on fundamental issues and critical choices about the community's direction.

The Goals Statement

The outcome of goal-setting is a goals statement. It can be long or short and can take several forms. For example, it can be organized by components of the land use design: work areas, living areas, open space areas, and so on. What follows are illustrative goal statements for living areas and commercial areas in a land use plan.

—*Goals for living areas:* A residential environment designed to fulfill human and social functions (shelter and related public services, child-rearing, social interaction, social participation, and leisure-time functions), with special attention given to (1) a range of housing choices for households of diverse economic, social, ethnic, and racial compositions; (2) safe neighborhoods with well-maintained housing, infrastructure, public amenities, and culturally significant landmarks and symbolic qualities; (3) accessibility to employment, shopping, education, recreation, and other activities; (4) attractiveness; (5) energy efficiency; and (6) cost-effectiveness for provision of infrastructure and public services.

—*Goals for commercial areas:* A system of shopping areas, coliseums, stadiums, and similar facilities accessible to public transportation as well as the regional highway system, located for convenient trips, located to serve all areas of the community, compatible with adjacent development, and attractive.

Some goals are more suited to a development management plan rather than the land use design. What follows are two examples of development management goals.

—Regulatory, taxation, fees, acquisition, and capital investment program should promote equity and constitutional rights of all segments of the community

with respect to the principles of equal protection, benefit, due process, reasonable means, and taking.

—Development control measures should be cost-efficient, simple in their procedures, reduce freedom and choice as little as possible, and allow flexibility in solutions to meet standards.

The Policy Component: Formulating Principles of Planning and Action

Policies constitute the third component of the policy framework, following the fact component and value component. Policies are principles of land use design or development management and are derived from goals but aimed more directly at what government can do to attain goals. Policies are expressed therefore in verbs rather than the nouns and adjectives used for stating goals and objectives. They also use such imperatives as *shall* and *should.* An example, related to the goal of an esthetically pleasing central business district, might be a policy to require new development on Main Street to provide pedestrian amenities and plant shade trees along the right of way. A policy does not normally specify the action to be taken. For example, it would not specify exactly how shade trees along Main Street would be required. It does not specify ordinance language or which particular parcels are affected. For example, a policy may be to extend water and sewer lines only to areas where revenues from user fees and taxes will exceed the costs of servicing the development. Policies can also be expressed as specific standards, however. A standard is a more specific version of a policy principle. For example, a standard may specify pin oak trees on Main Street to be consistent with existing trees on the street.

At the initial stages of advance planning, the policies will be very general and deal with fundamental questions. For example:

1. Growth: Will it be the community's policy to encourage growth, discourage growth, or encourage it under certain conditions? Should growth be low density or compact and high density?
2. Urbanization pattern: What pattern should be encouraged or discouraged in order to be consistent with policies above? These policies might address, for example, what minimum densities to encourage in transportation corridors if it is policy to encourage public transportation. Policy might address general shape (concentric, satellite, or linear) and grain (mixed land uses versus separated land uses, for example).
3. Environmental: What environmental qualities are most important to maintain?
4. Fiscal policy: How should the costs of development be distributed among various groups—existing residents, future residents, movers and new residents, development industry, landowners, others?

5. Transportation: Should public transportation be encouraged?
6. Infrastructure: How should private development be coordinated with the provision of public water, sewer, schools, and other community facilities?
7. Planning process: What is the schedule for completion of the plan, and what degree of participation is desired?
9. Land use and growth-management system: Will the emphasis be on regulation or some other approach, and on performance standards or design specification standards?

Sources for initial versions of policy parallel the sources for goals. Input policies include:

1. policy legacy—existing explicit and tacit policies of the community, derived from a search and inventory process;
2. state, federal, and regional policy mandates that are required to be followed by the local government; and
3. planning literature—examples from highly regarded policy plans of other communities and discussions in the literature.

Some of these "input policies" are only suggestive, and others, such as state policy in some "growth-directing" states, must be followed.

As in goal-setting, the planner needs to guide a community effort by planners, appointed officials, elected officials, and interest groups in reviewing the input policies, adding new policy based on goals, and synthesizing the results into a coordinated "output policy" statement.

The policy statement should make clear the linkage of policies to the goals they are meant to facilitate. To do that, policies should either be stated under each major goal, follow the same organizational scheme used for goals (e.g., physical, economic, or environmental), or in some other way clearly indicate which policies promote which goals. In that way, the decision-maker and policy users later can see the relevance of the policy. Table 10-2 illustrates one format to show linkages between goals and policies.

Table 10-2. A Policy Statement That Shows the Linkage among Findings, Policy, and Implementation Strategies

10.212 Soil Constraints

Findings

Above slopes of 15%, all soil types found in Gresham impose severe constraints for urban uses. Erosion and deposition caused by improper construction practices is a frequent problem on soils below 15%. Subsurface sewage disposal is not compatible with most soils in Gresham. (Section 2.220—Findings Document).

Policy

It is the City's policy to minimize development on soil conditions which may be hazardous.

Implementation Strategies

1. The Community Development Standards Document shall require that all development or alterations of hillsides with severe constraints upon urban uses (slopes between 15%-

Table 10-2, continued

35%) employ the most responsible construction, design, and management techniques possible to minimize hazardous conditions. This may include clustering of housing on gentler slopes, density reductions, etc.

2. The Community Development Standards Document shall establish erosion control landscaping requirements for parcels where the natural vegetative ground cover has been disturbed. The Community Development Code shall not permit land divisions in areas over 35% slope. Property which is entirely above 35% slope may be improved to the extent of one dwelling unit per existing lot of record. Subdivisions of land which are partially above 35% slope shall not develop the portions in excess of 35% slope.
3. The Community Development Standards Document shall discourage the use of subsurface sewage disposal systems and require connection to the City's sewerage system. Subsurface systems may be utilized as a temporary system if the City has committed service to the area within 5 years.
4. The City will coordinate its land development process with the U.S. Soil Conservation Service and seek that agency's assistance for proper soils management.

Source: Gresham, Oregon, *Gresham Community Development Plan*, vol. 1: *Policies and Summary* 1980, 11.

Summary and Conclusion

A policy framework plan, the product of direction-setting, has three components: goals, facts, and policies. Goals represent problems to be alleviated, aspirations to be achieved, or needs to be met. The fact component describes the conditions pertaining to problems, aspirations, and needs; causal factors relevant to those conditions; and factors that affect actions or their effectiveness. Facts and goals may be developed concurrently, each feeding information to the other. Policies are principles, based on both goals and conditions, that suggest likely directions for solutions but stop short of specifying actions. A policy framework creates the basis for further, more specific planning, but at the same time it is an interim guide to action.

The next few chapters will discuss two types of more specific land use policy plans: land classification plans and land use design plans. They will be based in part on the three components of the policy framework: goals, facts, and policies. In fact, planners often incorporate the goals, facts, and policies from direction-setting into those types of plans, thereby skipping formal adoption of a policy framework. What should not be skipped, however, is the conscious attention to setting goals and defining relevant conditions.

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