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SOME BASIC TYPES OF PUBLIC PLANNING IN SOUTH DAKOTA

INTRODUCTION

The word "planning" is often mentioned with respect to governmental policies and programs. Planning means, however, different things to different people. Consequently, discussions about public planning are often confused by the lack of understanding of terms and concepts. This newsletter is written to provide an improved basis for understanding the scope and range of public planning activities carried on within South Dakota.

DEFINITION

Even professional planners refer to numerous definitions of planning. Most such definitions, however, include two common elements which pertain to: (1) desirable goals, and (2) the direction of effort toward the attainment of these goals. Planning, then, involves goal-directed effort. Although planning is done by individuals and groups and both the private and public sectors, this newsletter deals only with public planning.

PROCEDURE

One way to identify various types of present and prospective future public planning efforts is to chronologically trace their antecedents and origins. This procedure is followed below. For present purposes, however, this historical review must be brief and general. It can only refer to selected examples of major types of problems and programs which have brought about planning in South Dakota since the depression of the 1930 s. Much of this review also applies to many or all other states influenced by geographically uniform federal policies and programs.

HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

Some formal type of planning has been carried out in South Dakota for several decades. During the mid- to late-1930 s, a State Planning Board operated with the support of federal funds. And, from 1938 through about 1941, some fifty counties within the state conducted land-use planning under the direction of the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the Association of Land Grant Colleges. Political support for these planning activities primarily arose out of conditions created by the Depression.

After World War II, public planning in South Dakota did not return in its pre-war forms. Rather, single-purpose planning for endeavors

such as highways, schools, housing, flood control, and irrigation prevailed for several years after the war. During the 1950s, however, some new directions in public planning began to emerge. For instance, federal funds became available to help pay for comprehensive community planning and multiple purpose planning of public land and water resources came into vogue. Communities and Soil Conservation Service began to cooperatively plan small watershed projects, and the federal government started to intensify efforts to have municipalities and industries reduce their emissions of wastes into the environment.

The first half of the 1960s witnessed the fastest growth in public planning since the depression. Most of this growth resulted directly from federal policies and programs. New or expanded federal programs requiring some kind of state and local planning included measures which strengthened environmental pollution control, provided funds for the acquisition of recreational and open-space lands, stimulated the economics of depressed areas, and supported social services for low-income groups. Many of these federal policies and programs resulted in planning and other activities which sometimes overlapped and lacked coordination.

Since the mid-1960s, fewer federal measures which require or encourage state and local planning have been created. Other kinds of measures which influence the direction of planning have come to the fore. Recent thrusts have been to consolidate and coordinate previously existing programs, to provide additional assistance in support of planning by state, substate regional, and local entities, and to increase local control over fiscal affairs. Several federal measures are in keeping with one or more these purposes and have affected planning within South Dakota. Such measures include the amendment of procedures followed by federal agencies which plan the development of water and related land resources, the creation of multi-jurisdictional planning and development programs, and the institution of revenue sharing districts within states, the revitalization of rural development programs, and the institution of revenue-sharing procedures.

WHAT THE FUTURE MAY HOLD

The foregoing emphasizes the influence of federal regulatory policies and assistance programs upon the nature of planning conducted within South Dakota and other states. The near future could bring federal legislation which

requires or encourages increased land-use planning. Major new areas of planning within South Dakota in the immediate future, however, might not be in direct response to any federal requirements or inducements. Rather, the future direction which planning takes within the state could be most affected by the necessity of coping with local and regional aspects of nationwide problems. Such problems include the shortage of energy and other basic raw materials required by agriculture, the transportation of agricultural products to market, and the provision of health-care facilities and medical doctors in rural areas. Transportation and health problems have been discussed in previous *Economics Newsletters*. Planning to assist in coping with energy and other raw materials problems could require considerable cooperation with surrounding states and federal agencies. For instance, planning the orderly withdrawal of lignite coal reserves, the restoration of strip-mined lands, the development of regional potentials for steam-electric power generation and coal gasification, and the allocation of water supplies among alternative uses require regional and even national coordination as well as state involvement.

ONE POSSIBLE CLASSIFICATION

This brief historical review has referred to numerous categories of programs and problems which have influenced the scope and range of public planning within South Dakota. The following classification of planning activities is based upon these categories. These classifications can be subdivided for more detailed analysis. Such planning endeavors include: (1) the provision of single-purpose facilities and services, (2) the coordination of single-purpose facilities and services, (3) the multiple-purpose development of public land and water resources, (4) the conservation of natural resources, (5) the restoration of environmental quality, (6) the acquisition or protection of lands most suited for public purposes, such as recreational sites, (7) the provision of assistance to low-income groups, (8) the stimulation of regional economic activity, and (9) the support of rural development.

Specific components within this classification are, of course, somewhat overlapping. Furthermore, many other classifications could be arranged according to characteristics other than the types of programs and problems associated with various planning endeavors. Nevertheless, the above review and classification could help to structure discussion and compromise concerning the proper role and level of governmental planning functions.

Robert L. Vertrees - Assistant Professor

Agri-Business Day, Tuesday April 2

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