SUMMER LAB'12: ART, CLIMATE CHANGE AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
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Cities, culture and sustainable development

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Note: Bibliographic references are at end.

Sustainable cities

"Despite the fact that the 'sustainable city' discourse is now
relatively mature, precise conceptualizations are rare and
contested."

"All interest sectors involved in achieving sustainable urban
development have genuine but differing 'visions' of the future. …
these 'ideals, and the debates about them, remain within their
discrete worlds and are rarely acknowledged or understood outside
their expert communities."

– K. Williams, 2010, *International Journal of
Urban Sustainable Development*

Culture and sustainable cities

"there is a dearth of studies and writing that articulate a cultural theory of a sustainable city in which (local) culture becomes a value of its own, not something merely seen as opposite to globalization and responding to it, or something of economic value, or treated as postmodern reading of a text"

– M. Nadarajah and A.T. Yamamoto, 2007,
Urban Crisis: Culture and the Sustainability of Cities

Observations from recent research

- To date, leading initiatives by the Government of Canada (ICSPs) and the Province of Quebec to make culture a cornerstone of its sustainable development policy ('Agenda 21 for Culture for Quebec')
  - Tend to only minimally integrate cultural considerations into overall visions and broader implementation initiatives
  - 'Take up' in communities varies
- European practices that integrate culture into city or community planning
  - Tend to exist separate from sustainable development planning
 - Sustainable cities guides do not explicitly address culture

Emergence of 'culture as the fourth pillar of sustainability' model

Environment + Economy + Social + Culture

Multilayered influences:

- Traditional/holistic views of society

- Discourses on culture and (sustainable) development (especially UNESCO)

- Searches for culture-sensitive models of urbanism and city planning (2 streams)

1. Recovering historical approaches to urban sustainability in non-Western contexts
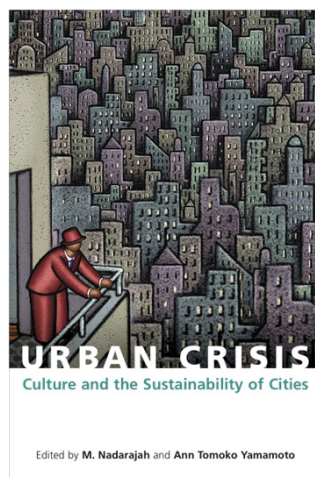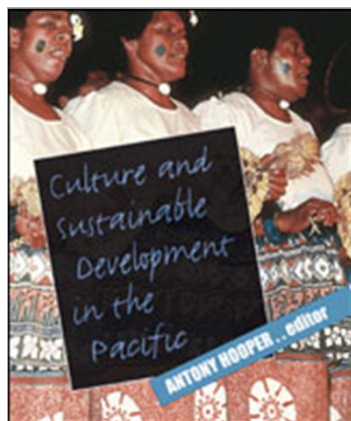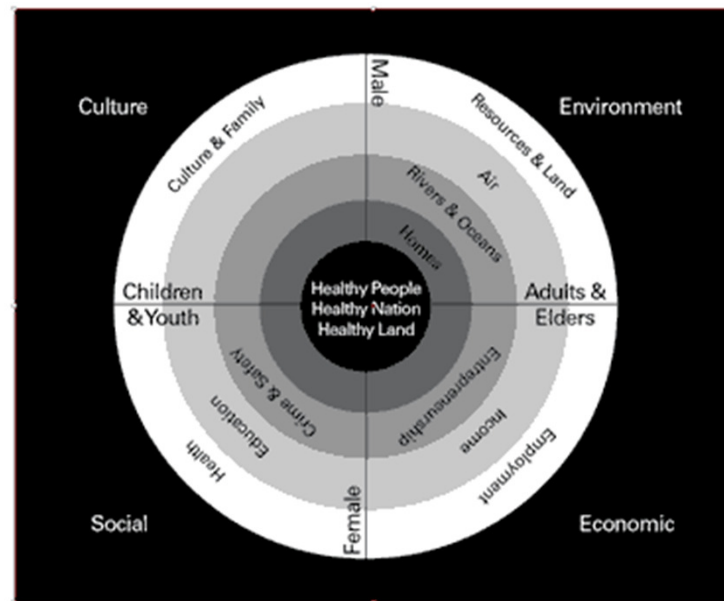

2. Culture as a pillar of community/urban development, integrating cultural considerations into planning processes and strategies
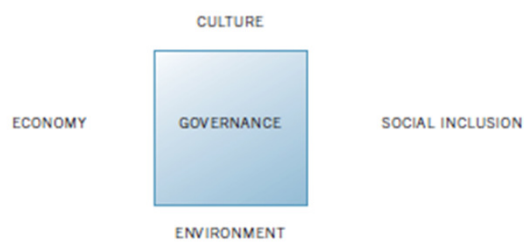
Representations

New Zealand 2006

Chester 2009

City of Grand Forks 2011

Québec 2009
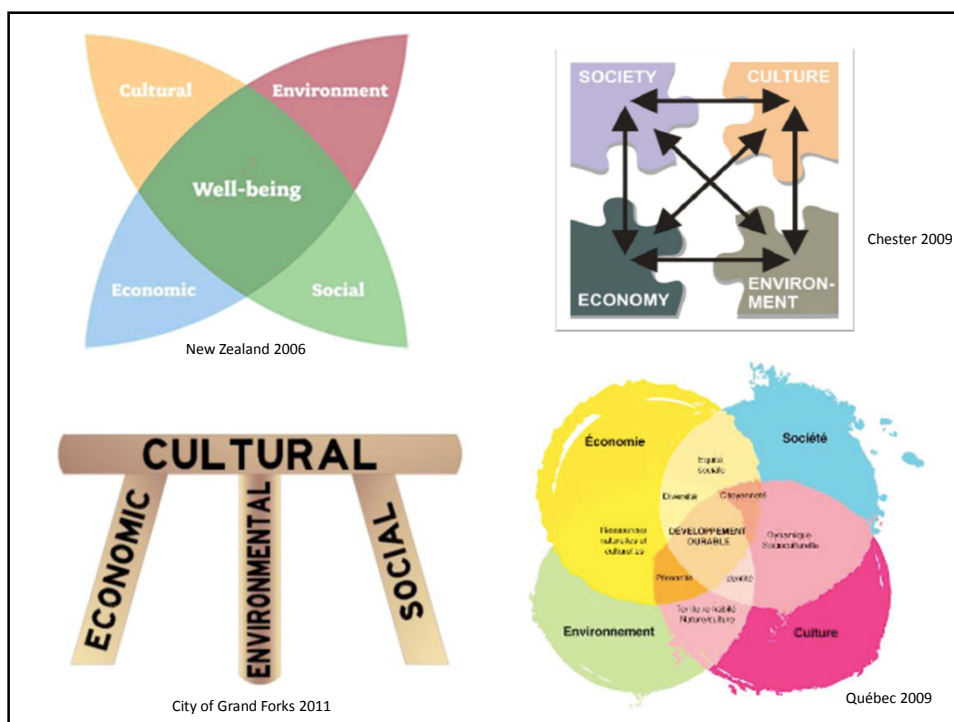
Aboriginal Medicine Wheel. Source: Cardinal and Adin 2005

Figure 1. The old triangle of sustainable development

ECONOMY

SOCIAL INCLUSION

ENVIRONMENT

Figure 2. The new square of sustainable development.

CULTURE

ECONOMY

GOVERNANCE

SOCIAL INCLUSION

ENVIRONMENT

UCLG 2009

Three phases

2000   2004   2008

Phase 1 – 2000-2002

Initial initiatives to differentiate 'culture' from 'social

Phase 2 – 2004-2006

Closely or directly informed by the earlier developments, primarily focusing on local development

Phase 3 – 2008 –

Expanded actors and a new wave of attention to advancing the place of culture within sustainability, especially at national and international levels

Duxbury and Jeannotte (Forthcoming)

Phase 1 » 2000-2002

- (Initial initiatives to differentiate 'culture' from 'social')
- Three parallel developments in Pacific/Asian region:
  - Kanazawa Initiative (2000-02) – examined the place of culture in building sustainable Asian cities (Nadarajah & Tomoko Yamamoto 2007)
  - Australia (2001) – advocated for a "four-pillar" model of sustainability (Hawkes 2001, Cultural Development Network)
  - New Zealand (2002) – new Local Government Act made local government responsible for promoting social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being

Phase 2 » 2004-2006

- (Closely or directly informed by the earlier developments, primarily focusing on local development)

2004   Australia Council for the Arts linked arts and ecologically sustainable development

2005   Canada: Federal government encouraged development of city and community sustainability plans based on four-pillar model

2005   UNESCO *Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions* referenced integration of culture in sustainable development

2006   New Zealand government published indicators of the four "well-beings" of communities

2006   Small Island Developing States adopted a four-pillar model of sustainability

2006   UK: Thames Gateway North Kent published *Sustainable Culture, Sustainable Communities* toolkit

Phase 3 » 2008 –

- (Expanded actors and a new wave of attention to advancing the place of culture within sustainability, especially at national and international levels)

2008-9   Asia-Europe Foundation launched initiatives on culture and sustainability

2009   Operational guidelines developed for Article 13 of UNESCO *Convention* (on integration of culture in sustainable development)

2009   UNESCO Experts Meeting discussed four-pillar model in development of a new cultural policy profile

2009   UCLG published report *Culture and Sustainable Development*

2008   Swedish Association of Local Authorities published position paper on *Culture in the Sustainable Society*

2009   Province of Quebec, Canada, adopted provincial sustainability action plan, based on four-pillar model (*Notre culture, au coeur du développement durable*)

Phase 3 » 2008 –

2010 Feb	Conference: Creating Cities: Culture, Space, and Sustainability, Munich, Germany
2010 Oct	Workshop: Sustainable Creative Cities: The Role of the Arts in Globalized Urban Contexts (4th Connecting Civil Societies of Asia and Europe Conference), Brussels, Belgium
2010 Nov	United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG) approved policy statement on 'Culture: Fourth Pillar of Sustainable Development'
2010 Dec	United Nations General Assembly adopted a Resolution on Culture and Development

. . .

Culture:
**Fourth Pillar
of Sustainable
Development**

United Cities
and Local
Governments

Cités et
Gouvernements
Locaux Unis

Ciudades
y Gobiernos
Locales Unidos

17 November 2010: **United Cities and Local Governments** (UCLG) approved Policy Statement 'Culture: the Fourth Pillar of Sustainable Development'

• integrate a cultural dimension in the design of all types of policies and sustainable development programmes

• dual approach to the relation between culture and sustainable development:

(1) developing a solid cultural policy / cultural sector, and

(2) advocating a cultural dimension in all public policies

20 December 2010: **United Nations General Assembly** adopted a Resolution on Culture and Development which emphasizes for the first time the important contribution of culture for sustainable development

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UCLG-ORU FOGAR Joint Statement on results of Rio+20:

"regrets that the outcome document does not recognize culture as the 4th pillar of SD [Sustainable Development]. This is inconsistent with the most innovative practices in all regions of the world."

And also regrets that

"the outcome document does not reach greater global commitments to ensure the sustainability of the planet"

Considering 'culture'

Emerging paradigm in process of elaboration

- Emergent and not yet fully coherent
- Still bottlenecks: conceptual and operational
- Multiplicity of discussions/actions

Perspectives on cultural resources in sustainable communities

- Culture as capital (both tangible and intangible)

- Culture as a way of life (a system of social relations)

- Culture as a vehicle for sustainable values

- Culture as creative expression providing insights on sustainability

- Culture as an adaptive process grounded in complexity and interdependence

Duxbury and Jeannotte 2011

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Cultural sustainability

i.e. attempts to transmit culture intergenerationally
(e.g. Bekerman & Kopelowitz 2008)

and

Culture in sustainability

i.e. roles of culture as aspect of broader societal sustainability; including a cultural perspective on all developments
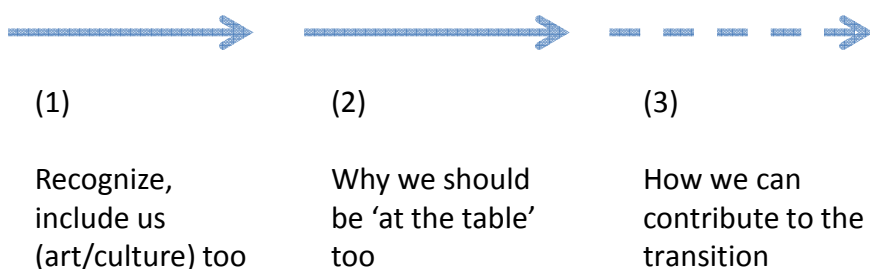(e.g. Hawkes 2001, 2006: Nadarajah & Tomoko Yamamoto 2007; Nurse 2006)

Operational challenges include:

- "Misunderstandings of the word *culture* and its different meanings or ambiguities: culture as way of life and culture as art.
- Difficulties encountered with the cross-sector approach, especially integrating culture in urban planning and economic policies.
- The complexity of the artistic world, with its great diversity of approaches and practices, from the individual to the collective, often producing a silo effect.
- Reluctance on the part of sustainable development actors, guardians of the three-pillar system.
- The 'culture is expensive and of no use' syndrome is a recurrent handicap for those trying to foster creativity, and it also appears when the issue of culture as the fourth pillar of sustainability is under discussion.
- Evaluation is essential because cultural policies are, like other public policies, subject to a democratic imperative of transparency and effectiveness. However, this is a very difficult exercise, since cultural policies perhaps touch on values and the domain of the subjective more than other local policies. It is better to focus on stages of improvement rather than on quantitative criteria."

(Duxbury, Cullen & Pascual 2012)

Within these contexts ….

Three layers of discourse

(1)

Recognize, include us (art/culture) too

(2)

Why we should be 'at the table' too

(3)

How we can contribute to the transition
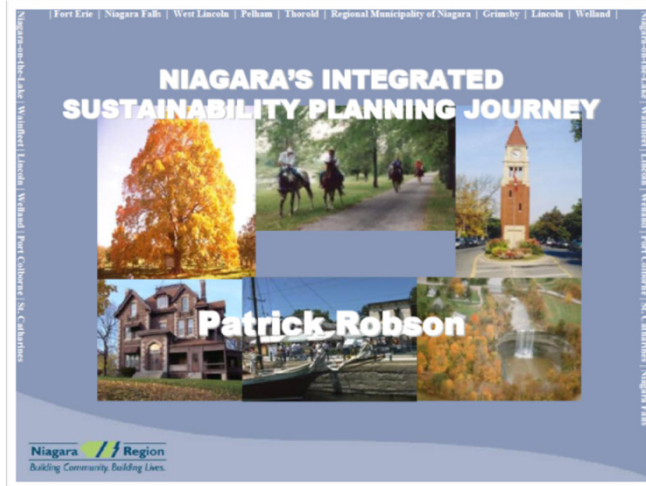
Case study – Canada:

Integrated Community Sustainability Plans (ICSPs)
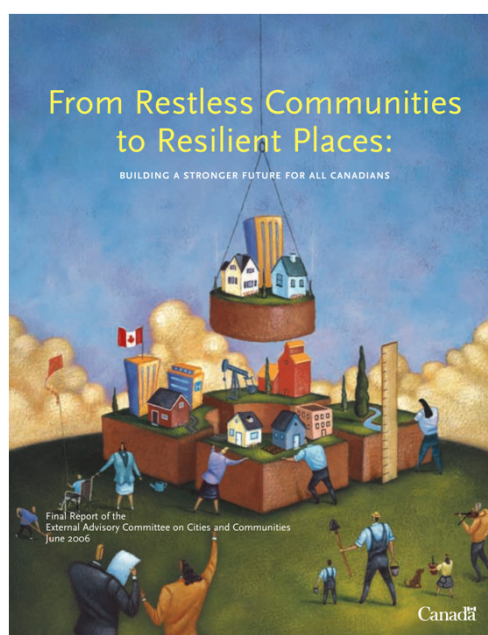
Examples

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Examples
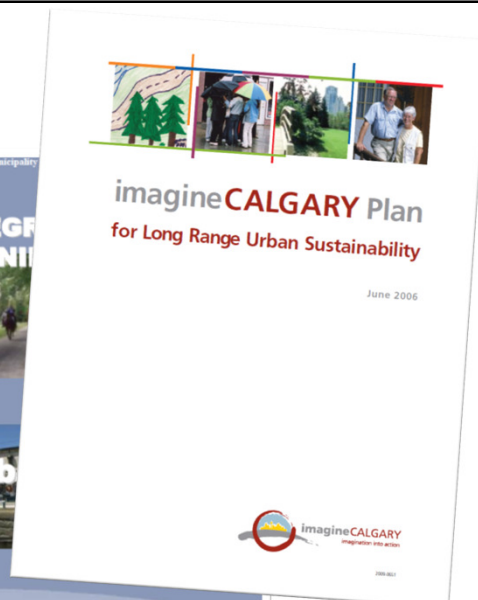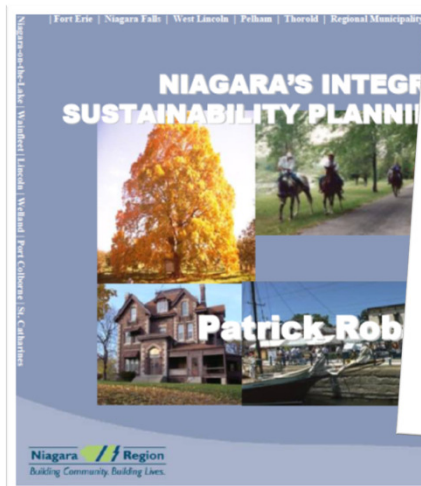
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Examples
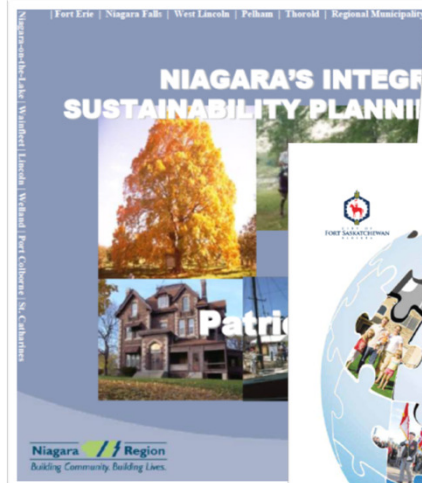
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Examples
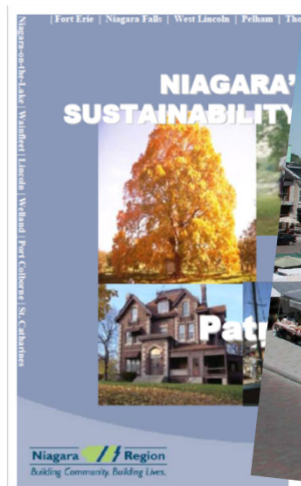
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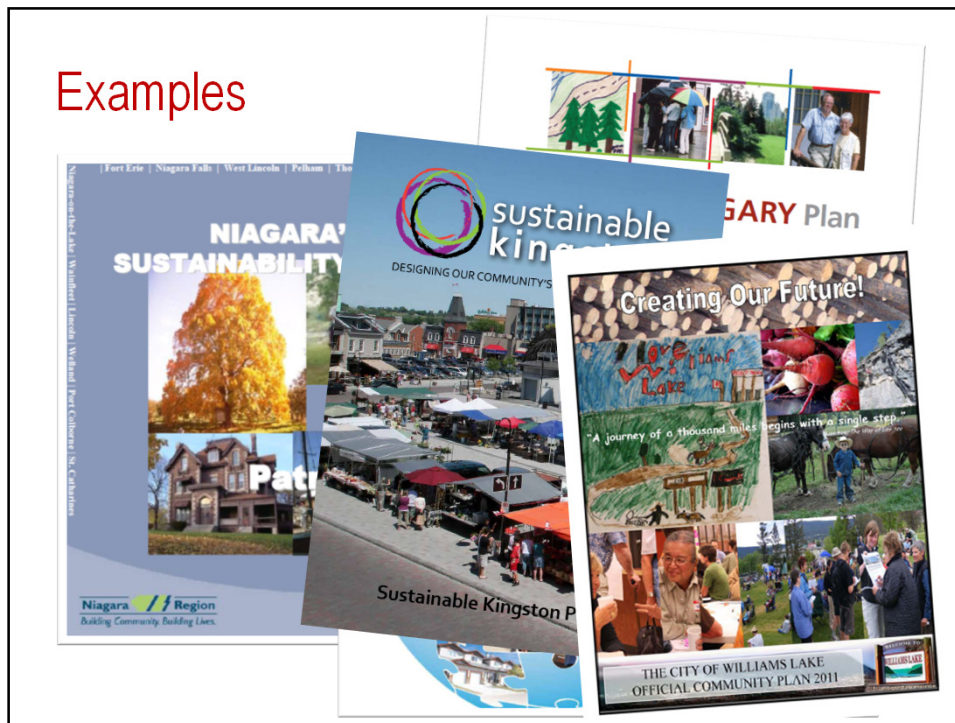
Examples

Examples
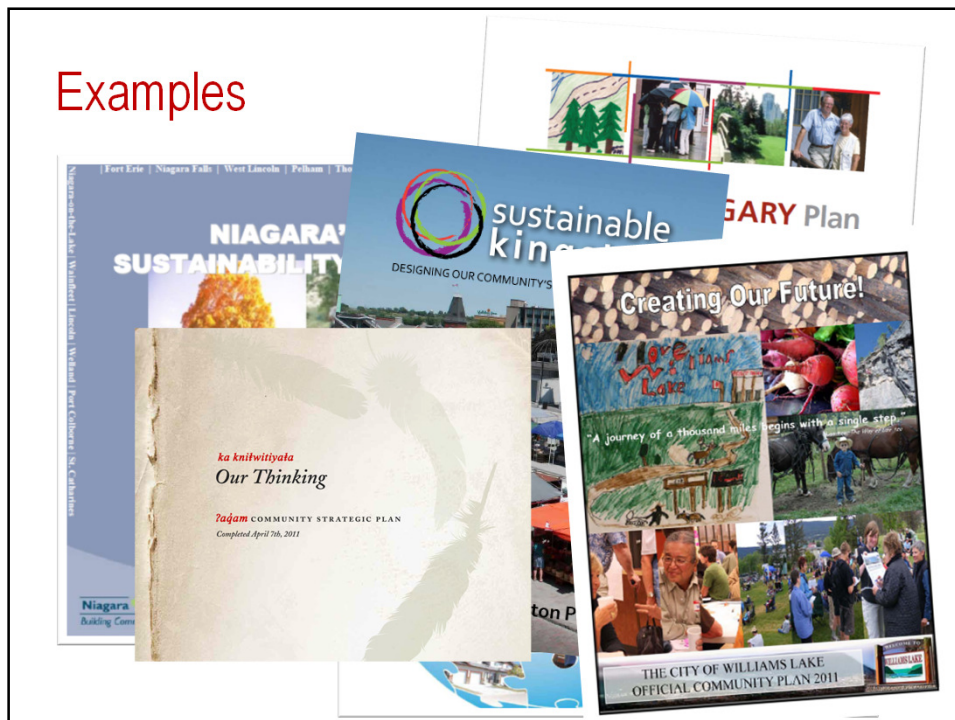
Examples

Culture in ICSPs

- Three-fold components:
  1. Historical/heritage vitality, including preservation of intangible and physical assets and then integrated into the community's life both in the present and the future
  2. Cultural vitality, including dynamic contemporary processes and opportunities to engage in a variety of ways through multiple channels
  3. Cultural values and that which is valued, shaping ways of living together and interactions with the environment
- Integrated with other 'pillars'?
- Systems approach?

Example: Powell River, British Columbia (pop. 20,000)

- Powell River *Sustainability Charter* (2009)
- C*ultural sustainability:* "developing, renewing and maintaining human cultures that create positive, enduring relationships with other peoples and the natural world"
- "The social/cultural aspect of sustainability encompasses the human aspect of sustainability. It means ensuring that basic conditions are met for human life to flourish, e.g. adequate health care, safety, recreational programs, and cultural events – supporting social cohesion and diversity, and appealing to the human need for belonging."
- Cultural considerations are linked tightly with social dimensions
- Charter Principles explicitly acknowledge the Aboriginal origins of the territory: "Recognize and respect Tla'amin aboriginal rights, title and cultural history".
- Among 7 **socio-cultural priorities** that "define the future to which the community aspires", three are cultural: *transfer of knowledge and history* held by community elders to youth; *maintaining the community's connection to its cultural heritage* by identifying, protecting and celebrating archaeological and historical sites important to the Tla'amin First Nation and other community ethnic groups; and *"cultural connection,"* using cultural events to express pride in the community's cultural diversity and arts *and* as important points of social connection "where neighbours meet, new connections are made and people are able to express themselves"

(Jeannotte & Duxbury, Forthcoming)

Through the structured processes and public dialogues:

- Dialogues on community sustainability include culture and social elements
- Extensive community participation expected
- Cultural actors => experts
- Arts → broader cultures in community
- Inter-domain linking projects/ideas can be fostered (though integration still not there)
- Neighbourhoods as the next frontier

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Climate change?

- ICSPs
  - Past/current issues … desired future
  - Resiliency
  - Expected changes?
- Canada (BC) – Legislative requirement for communities to address issue of climate change / GHGs in official community plans
- Changing contexts – generations of initiatives/documents

Moving forward?

Three layers of discourse

(1)

Recognize,
include us
(art/culture) too

(2)

Why we should
be 'at the table'
too

(3)

How we can
contribute to the
transition

Three layers of discourse

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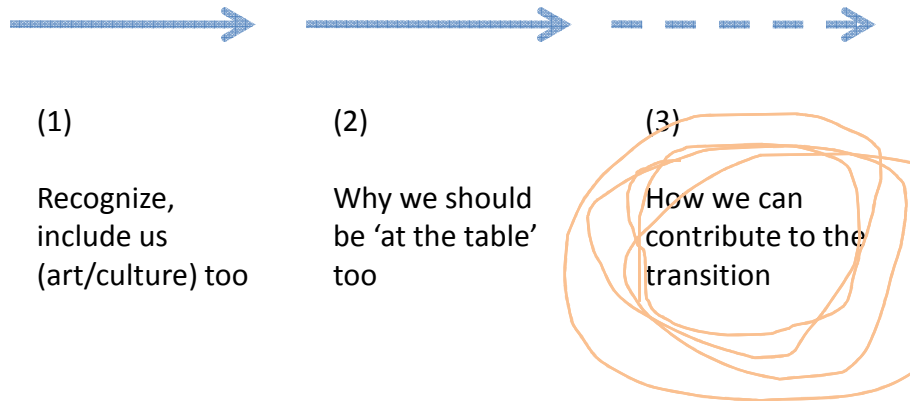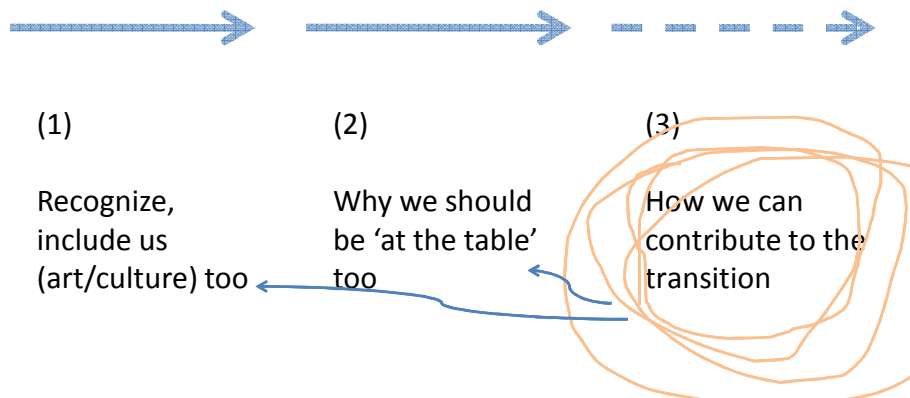
Develop new discourses or narrative frames

"Sustainability models and worldviews must be mediated by what Martens calls "truth machines" or heuristic instruments that help bring better insight into complex problems of sustainability, namely, analytic methods, participative methods, and managerial methods. We would suggest a fourth that is a fundamental characteristic of the cultural pillar: *linguistic framing. By this we refer* to cultural narratives and language structures, in order to draw attention to the ways in which these frameworks for expression, communication, and understanding shape the way we think and act.

Redclift (2006), among others, has called for new discourses or narrative frames around sustainability – discourses that recognize that development needs are defined differently by different generations and cultures. The development of new discourses or narratives will require two fundamental elements: the articulation of new metaphors of sustainability that describe more holistic ways of viewing the world and the participation of those who can create and tell stories based on these new metaphors."

(Duxbury and Jeannotte 2012)

Identify pathways

e.g. Vancouver Parks Board

December 2006 windstorm

Canada: Stanley Park Environmental Art Project

The Ivy Project

The Ivy Project

The Ivy Project

The Ivy Project

The Urban Weaver Project
Connecting artists with nature

Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation + Stanley Park Ecology Society
MacLean Park Fieldhouse

"The Urban Weaver supports artists from diverse traditions working with
ecologists exploring the creative repurposing of green waste."

"how invasive plants in the city can be used as urban substitutes for traditional
weaving materials … that cannot be sustainably harvested in urban centres"

The Urban Weaver Project

Water Hyacinth project, Alafuro Skiki, Nigeria

How do we live together
How do we adapt to change
How do we reduce the damage to our world

"New discourses and new metaphors emerge through
continued conversations within society. These
conversations are already taking place in many
communities and are mediated by and through culture
and language, as a supplement to conventional
planning methodologies. The cultural pillar can be
the catalyst that brings about new ways of thinking
about the troublesome relationship that has existed
thus far between *sustainability* and *development*."

(Duxbury and Jeannotte 2012)

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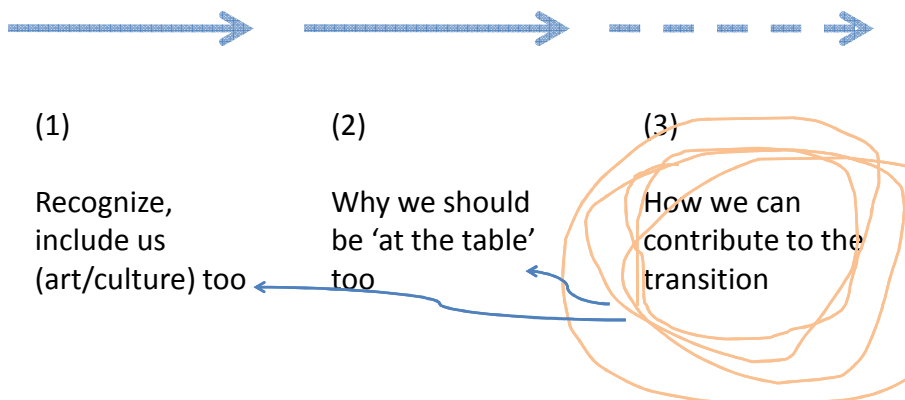
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