For Comprehensive Planning

11.201 – Gateway
Week 6
Fall 2010
October 18, 2010
Comprehensive Rational Model

• Setting goals and objectives (long-range)
• Comprehensive list of strategies
• Data and analysis to evaluate all strategies
• Implement optimum strategy
• Evaluate outcomes
• Return to goals as needed

• Inspired by modernism and a belief in rationality
• Basic assumption: identifiable public interest
Characteristics

- Comprehensive
- Integrated
- Long-range
- Optimal solutions
What is the planning process?

• Types
  – Normative theories: what *should* happen?
  – Descriptive theories: what does happen?

• Examples
  – Plan making for cities?
  – Decision-making in public policy?
  – Designing urban space?
“The general plan is the official statement of a municipal legislative body which sets forth its major policies concerning desirable future physical development; the published general-plan document must include a single, unified general physical design for the community, and it must attempt to clarify the relationships between physical-development policies and social and economic goals.” (Kent)

“To me, therefore, there can be no such thing as a flexible plan, since there can be no such a thing as a flexible policy in relation to physical development. A so-called “flexible” plan is no plan at all.” (Kent)
The Urban General Plan (Kent)

- **Client:** City Council
- **Contents**
  - Working-and-living areas
  - Community facilities
  - Civic-design
  - Circulation
  - Utilities
- **Characteristics**
  - **Contents**
    - Physical focus
    - Long-range
    - Comprehensive (in scope)
    - General
    - Relate proposals to policies
  - **Procedures**
    - Formatted for public debate
    - City Council’s plan
    - Available and understandable to public
    - Educational
    - Amendable

See the Berkeley Master Plan [here](link).
Discussion:
“Urban General Plan” Pro and Con
A Defense of ‘Comprehensive’ Planning (Faludi)

• Lindblom and others harshly critiqued the rational comprehensive planning model as impractical, proposed incrementalism as an alternative

• Faludi argues model not dissimilar with comprehensive model with reasonable limits

• The key differences are underlying theory of society, scope of images, and relative autonomy
Friday

- Emma Rothschild: 12:00-2:00
11.201 Gateway to the Profession of Planning
Fall 2010

For information about citing these materials or our Terms of Use, visit: http://ocw.mit.edu/terms.