

**ALLIANCE FOR REGIONAL LEADERSHIP**

LEADERSHIP FORUM • MAY 2000

**DRAFT**

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**TOWARD REGIONAL STEWARDSHIP:  
HOW REGIONAL LEADERS ARE CONNECTING THE DOTS AND  
CREATING NEW COALITIONS FOR CHANGE**

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*A National Scan of Innovative  
Regional Leadership*

*Prepared for the  
Alliance for Regional Leadership*

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*What are the sources of regional leadership today? How are regional leaders addressing regional challenges? What are the most innovative approaches to regional leadership? What can regional leaders learn from each other about what works and what doesn't work?*

*This national scan of innovative regional leadership examines best practices in 18 regions across America. It builds on two previous studies of regional leadership: *Grassroots Leaders for a New Economy* (1997) and *Boundary Crossers* (1997), which identified a trend toward more collaborative leadership in regions based on public-private partnerships and collaborative regional initiatives led by civic leaders. This scan looks at what has happened in regions in the past several years, as regional leaders continue to experiment with a new approach to regional challenges.*

*The scan finds that most regions are searching for new ways to connect regional leadership efforts and create more integrated approaches to economic, environmental, social and governance challenges. In many regions, distinct conversations are about preparing for the New Economy, creating more livable communities, promoting more inclusion, and developing more effective government. These regional conversations, however, are often not always connected to each other. In fact, in some communities an “anonymity of leadership” exists: Regional leaders simply don't know each other because of the growing scale of metropolitan regions—the trend toward entrepreneurial businesses, and increasing ethnic diversity. The challenge that many regions are grappling with is how to “connect the dots” and build a new coalition for change to address regional issues in a more effective way. Some regions are searching for ways to connect informal civic leadership better to more formal regional government to influence public policy, especially in promoting more livable communities.*

*Some regions are creating more connected leadership to respond to the challenges of the New Economy, livable communities, inclusion, and government reform. Although no single model exists for doing so, a variety of regional experiments are under way. Many of these regional efforts are looking for better ways to create a more connected community through regional stewardship. Regional stewards are citizens who are committed to place and who want to organize new coalitions to create great places to live and work. This scan will explore these regional experiments, identify lessons learned, and examine the emergence of regional stewardship as a new style of leadership.*

Throughout this scan, we make a distinction between regional government, governance, and stewardship. Government is the formal structure that makes policy decisions and allocates public resources. Governance is the informal process of business, government, and community collaboration that shapes decisions in a region. Stewardship is the commitment of regional leaders to a sense of place that drives the creation and implementation of a vision for a region. A challenge this scan highlights is how regions can relate formal government structures to informal governance processes through regional stewardship.

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## The New Challenges: The Changing Sources of Regional Leadership

Globalization, the digital revolution, new demographics, and devolution of authority are dramatically reshaping patterns of regional leadership. In the recent past, the sources of regional leadership were clearly within local communities—local elected officials and CEOs of corporations, regional banks, utilities, and local chambers. Today, many regions suffer from an “anonymity of leadership.” Leaders may still exist, but they often come from different sources, and they may not know each other in many expanding metropolitan regions. Why happened, and what are regions doing about it?

- *Globalization.* In the past two decades, globalization has meant that corporations must now compete on a worldwide basis, often with investments in many different regions. CEOs of most large corporations have fewer roots in a single region and have less time for regional civic affairs. The greatest impact has been on Fortune 500 companies that were anchor firms in major regions. Recently, the globalization process has changed the nature of competition in major banks and utilities, resulting in both deregulation and consolidations. The question now for most regions is whether major corporations can be both global and regional at the same time.
- *Digital revolution.* The Internet has fundamentally changed the way business takes place, giving firms powerful tools to connect directly with customers, reengineer operations, and network with each other to create greater productivity and improved quality. The emergence of small, entrepreneurial firms driven by the Internet has dramatically changed the nature of business leadership in many regions. Rather than looking solely to large firms for leadership, regions are asking how to recruit young entrepreneurs from the New Economy into positions of regional leadership.
- *New demographics.* Many regions are experiencing major transitions in their demographic profile. In California, Texas, and Florida, the increase in the Latino population is significant. These and other regions are experiencing a dramatic rise in immigration from Asia as well as Latin America. Consequently, the sources of regional leadership are changing. Regional leaders will increasingly come from a much more diverse population with different pathways to leadership.
- *Devolution of authority.* For the past decade, authority has been shifting from the federal government to states and communities. Although regions have more responsibility today, their capacity to respond is fragmented and weak. As metropolitan regions have grown in geography, most regions now encompass many local governments. Mayors and local elected officials do not have the authority to make regional decisions, and the failure to coordinate key functions results in inadequate regional outcomes in key areas such as transportation and housing. Most regions are experimenting with new forms of distributed and networked governance, but the success stories are few.

The common challenge to most metropolitan regions is that regional leadership is not only fragmented and ineffective; often it does not exist at all. With global corporations, banks, and utilities looking beyond the region; New Economy entrepreneurs not yet plugged in; new immigrants and ethnic leaders not yet fully included in the regional dialogue; and local elected leaders often in conflict, it is no wonder that many regions are experiencing an “anonymity of leadership.”

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## New Issues: Connecting the Dots in the Changing Regional Agenda

As regions search for new sources of leadership, four distinct conversations are taking place. Rarely are they connected, and the result is that regional leaders working in one area often do not know their counterparts working in another area.

The four conversations are:

- *New Economy*: how to prepare people and places to succeed in the New Economy
- *Livable Community*: how to create great places to live and work
- *Community-Based Regionalism*: how to ensure that everyone is included
- *Government Reform*: how to ensure that government is effective and responsive.

Different leaders in a region lead each of these conversations. Different regions place different priorities on the four areas, depending on the needs of that particular region. Some regions do not see the need to connect the conversations; others have begun and are beginning to experiment with approaches to help make the connections.

Figure 1 illustrates how the four areas are beginning to connect around specific issues.

FIGURE 1



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## *New Economy: Preparing People and Places to Succeed*

The New Economy is about more than high tech. It is a way of competing on the basis of speed, quality, flexibility, knowledge, and networks. Industries as diverse as retail, entertainment, apparel, polymers, food, and autos are being fundamentally transformed by the New Economy. The Internet is a driving force in this change, much like electricity was in the last hundred years. What is becoming increasingly clear is that all institutions—including education, government, and community organizations—will need to adapt to the new rules of the New Economy.

Some regions are taking active steps to help people and places succeed in the New Economy. *Austin's* 360 Summit brought together young entrepreneurs to identify steps to ensure not only that the Austin region maintain its economic leadership role but also that education and transportation keep up and that steps be taken to maintain its unique quality of life. A similar dialogue has been taking place in the *Greater Washington, D.C.* area under the leadership of the Potomac Conference, which brings together regional business, government, and education leaders to develop a common agenda to promote a “world-class connected community” for the New Economy. This agenda focuses on innovation, education, inclusion, quality of life, and regionalism. Steve Case, chairman and CEO of America Online, has become a leader in this regional movement, speaking out for a more connected community. *Minneapolis* is asking similar questions about the how to prepare for the New Economy. The Minneapolis Citizen League is leading a series of projects focused on the New Economy. The projects ask, “How do we prepare for the New Economy without leaving anyone out?” Many regions, including *Silicon Valley*, are focusing on closing the “digital divide” to ensure that everyone participates in the digital economy.

This conversation is driven by the understanding that a strong regional community is the foundation for the New Economy and by recognition that the New Economy can make a contribution to creating a stronger regional community. New Economy leaders are coming forward as regional leaders to help address these issues.

## *Livable Community: Creating Great Places to Live and Work*

Livable communities have become a rallying cry for regions that are addressing the problems of sprawl and congestion. Regional coalitions of environmental and business leaders are joining together across the country to challenge traditional suburban development and are advocating for more compact development, transit-oriented housing, walkable neighborhoods, and protected open space. Sometimes under the banner of Smart Growth, sometimes called New Urbanism, the livable-communities movement is clearly gaining momentum as a result of recent surveys and local initiatives.

Regions are taking a wide variety of steps to promote livable communities. *Chattanooga* has been a leader in this movement with its grassroots process, Vision 2000. This process involved thousands of citizens in hundreds of projects that have made that city one of the most sustainable communities in America. This process has been a long-term commitment, which has begun to change the whole culture of the community by focusing on a series of tangible projects, including a major river walk; downtown renewal, including a large freshwater aquarium; an eco-industrial park; and major transit and housing innovations. *Chicago Metropolitan 2020*, a major new civic initiative in that region, has begun a series of steps to shape transportation and development in more integrated ways. These steps include the business-supported Metropolitan Principles that will commit business to investing in communities that provide housing and transit, a major transportation bond issue, and strategies to promote more transit-oriented development.

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*Bay Area Council*, a major business group, has stimulated the Bay Area Alliance for Sustainable Development, a coalition of business, environmental, and neighborhood groups that are creating a Compact for Sustainable Development and projects focused on land use, housing, and increasing capital investment in low-income neighborhood development.

Regions understand that continued patterns of land use drive this conversation; housing and transportation will undermine the quality of life and economic vitality of the region. Regions are exploring new visions of urban design and promoting them as alternatives to the traditional models. New coalitions of business and environmental leaders are joining in common cause on these issues.

## *Community-Based Regionalism: Ensuring That Everyone Is Included*

In the past, neighborhood and regional leaders had little in common. In fact, they saw themselves in opposition on many issues. While focusing on community development within their own communities, neighborhood leaders often saw the region's larger economic trends working against their interests either by moving businesses and people to the suburbs or by gentrifying existing low-income areas. Although conflicts remain, a promising movement—community-based regionalism—recognizes that the interests of neighborhoods are connected to the future health of the region and vice versa. Recent research by Manual Pastor and others has clearly shown that long-term regional prosperity is linked to reducing poverty and inequality in metropolitan areas. The clear implication is that equity must become a part of every regional strategy, not just an afterthought.

A number of regional efforts are under way that promote community-based regionalism. Policy Link has completed a survey of some of leading examples. In Los Angeles, the Metropolitan Alliance, a regional collaboration of community organizations, has been working with DreamWorks and other entertainment firms to open up the multimedia/entertainment industry to neighborhood residents. In Oakland, the Unity Council, one of the city's oldest community-based institutions, has led a grassroots effort in support of transit-oriented development in the heart of Oakland's largest Latino community. In San Antonio, Quality Employment Through Skills Training (QUEST) is working with regional employers and local community colleges to develop industry-specific job training and placement that have helped redefine relationships between employers, community colleges and local communities.

Community-based regionalism is based on the understanding that regions' long-term economic and social well-being depends on the strengths of their neighborhoods. Regional strategies that promote inclusion and opportunity will help create prosperity for all.

## *Government Reform: Making Regional Governance More Effective and Responsive*

Although few examples of regional government exist in the United States, a wide variety of experiments are under way to create innovative regional governance—ways to solve problems that cross local boundaries. The United States has seen three waves of regional government reform. The first was the *unigov* movement of the 1960s. This movement resulted in consolidations of city and county governments in places such as Indianapolis, Jacksonville, and Dade County. Based primarily on business leaders' interest in cost efficiency, this consolidation approach has not been widely adopted because of local elected officials' general reluctance to accept regional government. The 1970s saw the growth of regional *councils of government*: voluntary associations of local governments often mandated by the federal government to

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receive federal funds in such areas as transportation. Although serving a role in information sharing and coordination of federal programs, the influence of councils of governments has been generally quite limited in terms of effective regional planning because of a lack of implementation authority. An exception is the role of the regional council in implementing the federal transportation program, which required regional planning as a condition of funding. The 1980s saw the rise of the regional *public-private partnership*. A wide variety of ad hoc arrangements developed to address regional issues based on the common interests of business and government. Although voluntary in nature, these partnerships sometimes resulted in the creation of regional special-purpose authorities in areas such as housing, transportation, and economic and community development (e.g., economic development corporations). Taken together, the regional landscape is filled with different types of regional public, private, and public-private organizations.

Some informal, regional, public-private partnerships are now exploring ways to influence the decision of formal government agencies, especially in the areas of land use, transportation, and housing. These discussions are under way in San Diego, Chicago, the Bay Area, Phoenix, and Greater Washington, D.C. In *San Diego*, state legislation is considering the consolidation of several regional public agencies, including the council of government, into a single regional planning agency for land use, transportation, and housing. The private sector has developed a Partnership for the New Economy led by New Economy leaders working on similar issues. The question will be how to connect the public and private efforts. *Chicago Metropolis 2020* is looking at ways to influence decisions made by the regional planning agency in the same areas of transportation, land use, and housing. Both *Minneapolis* and *Portland* have established different forms of regional government. Although the Metro Council in Minneapolis is appointed, the Metro Council in Portland is elected. In both regions, civic efforts help to set the agenda for regional government, with the Citizen League playing that role in the Twin Cities and a variety of civic groups, including the 1000 Friends of Oregon, playing that role in Portland. The most recent dramatic example of regional governance reform was the creation of the *Georgia Regional Transportation Authority* by the state government. This new public authority appointed by the governor has authority over not only regional transportation but also land use and housing.

We are entering a new period of experimentation in regional governance reform driven primarily by the need to connect private-sector interest in livable communities with public-sector authority over physical planning. New types of networked or distributed governance will likely connect local governments and public-private partnership to promote regional goals through regional networks. In other cases, such as Atlanta, we will see new efforts at government consolidation. In all these experiments, we will find a way to relate the efforts of the informal civic leadership with regional public authorities better.

## *Connecting the Regional Conversations*

In many regions, these conversations are taking place among some leaders, but they are not connected—in part because of the “anonymity of leadership” endemic to regions today. They are not connected also because regions are at different stages in their development with different issues on their list of priorities.

An example of how these conversations can come together is *Pittsburgh*. Pittsburgh, like many industrial cities, has gone through a dramatic economic transformation in the past decade. Once known for its steel industry, Pittsburgh today has a diversified economy that is driven increasingly by entrepreneurial firms in software, bioscience, robotics, and materials, with a strong intellectual foundation in world-class universities such as Carnegie Mellon. Unfortunately, the Pittsburgh leadership and its citizens have taken a

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while to appreciate fully the economic changes that have taken place. The Heinz Endowments embarked on an effort to increase awareness of Pittsburgh's entrepreneurial economy by creating a Metrics to track progress, creating a "hot team" of young entrepreneurs to develop a strategy to retain top talent, and helping to form Innovation Works, a new public-private initiative to help bring venture capital and support to innovative businesses and to share information about Pittsburgh's innovation economy. A cadre of New Economy leaders has emerged and is beginning to play an important role in Pittsburgh's regional leadership, working side by side with the business leadership from more traditional firms.

At the same time, the Heinz Endowments was sponsoring a Sustainable Pittsburgh initiative in partnership with the Allegheny Conference, the long-established business-leaders group in the region and the environmental community. This year-long initiative raised awareness about sustainability issues, creating new metrics and creating a leadership team. One research project showed how economic vitality depends increasing on a strong quality of life. At the same time, the young entrepreneurs in Pittsburgh increasingly understood how important the livable community, including vital downtown areas, is to attracting and retaining creative talent in the regions.

Connecting the New Economy and livable community became the next step for the Heinz Endowment. The young-entrepreneur leaders concerned about the livable community and the leaders of Sustainable Pittsburgh who recognized the role that quality of life plays in the New Economy will join together to develop principles and policies that will guide the future development of Pittsburgh toward a region that sustains both a New Economy and a livable community. This example illustrates the potential for connecting the different regional conversations in a more purposeful way through regional leadership.

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## **Innovative Leadership Approaches: Regional Experiments**

Some regions have made concerted efforts to “connect the dots” and build new coalitions for change across the different regional conversations.

### *Chicago Metropolis 2020: Connecting the Dots*

In 1999, the Commercial Club of Chicago, a business leadership group, created a regional vision, *Chicago Metropolis 2020*. In doing so, the Commercial Club returned to its roots when it commissioned at the turn of the century the highly acclaimed Burnham Plan, which became the guiding plan for the development of downtown Chicago. The Chicago Metropolis 2020 vision outlined goals for the economic, social, and physical development of the region in an integrated way. The Chicago Metropolis 2020 organization developed as a nonprofit to build broad ownership for the vision through its diverse board and civic engagement. The Executive Council of Chicago Metropolis 2020 is a high-profile group that is composed of 50% business representatives from the Commercial Club and the other 50% from cities, community organizations, and labor and faith communities. Chicago Metropolis 2020 has engaged the community in a series of eight regional forums to help set priorities for the region. Chicago Metropolis 2020 will release the first Regional Report Card in September, which will measure progress toward the regional vision expressed as 16 goals.

Led by George Ranney, former vice-president of Inland Steel, Chicago Metropolis 2020 is an example of a new type of regional civic organization that connects business support to broader sources of leadership to build strong coalitions for change on critical regional issues. It is combining clout with active civic engagement. The major focus to date has been on livable-community issues, especially transportation. Chicago Metropolis 2020 has been a vocal advocate of the need to reorganize agencies active in regional planning and lobbying for federal and state transportation funding. In addition, 2020 has adopted the Metropolis Principles that corporations will use in siting new facilities that are consistent with the smart-growth/livable-communities thinking. The tough challenge for the region remains regional governance for land use, transportation, and housing.

Chicago Metropolis 2020 has been a leading example of combining business clout and civic engagement to become a “regional civic catalyst” that spotlights critical issues, organizes civic teams to address those issues, and reports on progress as a means of educating regional leaders and stimulating further action.

### *The Austin Network: New Sources of Regional Leadership*

In 1999, two young entrepreneurs from the New Economy, Peter Zandan and Steve Papermaster, organized the Austin 360 Summit to connect the emerging technology community and to encourage greater participation in Austin’s future. More than 300 high-level executives joined in an active day of dialogue and debate. From the first 360 Summit and its follow-up in 2000, the Austin Network has been an ongoing vehicle for regional civic dialogue. At the second Summit, it adopted a “declaration of interdependence” that outlined strategic commitments. This declaration recognized that “we are interdependent on the resources, institutions, assets and people of the community.” The purpose of the Network is to build collaboration among and beyond individual interest to preserve a positive lifestyle for the entire community. The Network will initially focus on transportation, education, and inclusion while working

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toward a long-term vision of connecting the technology and cultural assets of the region to promote Austin as a leading “creative community.”

Austin has had a recent tradition as a leader in regional collaboration from the time the business community, the university, and the city joined forces through the Austin Chamber to create one of the most dynamic technology regions in the nation. The earlier efforts focused on attracting and growing high-tech manufacturing based on the talent and quality of life offered by the region. In recent years, the profile of Austin has changed, with an economic shift toward entrepreneurial software and multimedia firms and the growth of Austin as a metropolitan region of many cities. As Austin grew, it faced the same traffic-congestion challenges of other major regions, and concerns about income disparities have grown as well.

With mentorship from some of Austin’s established leaders from a long-standing regional group, AARO, the young entrepreneurs from the growing New Economy took a big step with the 360 Summit by bringing together the new leadership and creating a network that would connect both existing and new leadership. The Austin Network is “not a new organization... instead it is a network of networks, a connector of people, institutions and resources. It will facilitate the collaboration of teams of entrepreneurial stewards to do serious work on serious issues.” Co-chaired by Tom Meredith, former CFO of Dell Computer and Lee Walker, a venture capitalist, the Network will become a platform for regional leadership on a number of key issues. It can also become a bridge between Austin’s new committed young-entrepreneur leadership and its more established leaders to focus attention on Austin’s challenges for the future.

The Austin Network has become a leading example of new ways to engage young entrepreneurs from the New Economy in regional leadership efforts. It also illustrates how to connect emerging and established leaders through mentorship.

## *Silicon Valley 2010/SV-CAN: Creating New Coalitions for Change*

In 1998, Joint Venture: Silicon Valley, a regional public-private partnership, released *Silicon Valley 2010*, which provided a strategic vision and specific goals to address the region’s critical quality-of-life challenges that have become critical to the future of the center of innovation. It was the product of 18 months of work by a Vision Leadership Team composed of a diverse group of regional citizens from business, government, education, and the community, representing a broad cross-section of the region’s changing demography. Chaired by Jay Harris, the publisher of the *San Jose Mercury News*, and Dianne McKenna, former Santa Clara County supervisor, the vision leadership group integrated the inputs from eight focus groups, a public-opinion survey, and ten community town hall meetings to create a vision with 19 specific goals. An integrated framework for these goals focused on an innovative economy, livable environment, inclusive society, and regional stewardship.

To implement this long-term vision, Joint Venture created the Silicon Valley Civic Action Network, a diverse grassroots group that will educate and advocate for the goals in SV 2010. Funded by the Packard Foundation and led by Greg Larson, a former city manager, SV-CAN focuses on promoting the goal of a livable community and shared prosperity through active civic engagement. SV-CAN will be sponsoring a series of workplace forums for employees at major companies such as Hewlett-Packard and Sun. It has also hosted community forums on closing the “digital divide,” with a specific focus on involving the Latino community.

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SV-CAN is an example of an effort to create a new type of grassroots organization that can work with regional leadership to help build broader community support for the fundamental changes that are necessary to create a positive future for the region. It also illustrates the integrated regional framework that connects the four regional conversations around the theme of regional stewardship and civic engagement.

## *Central Carolina Choices: Organizing Civic Leadership*

Central Carolina Choices (CCC) is a three-year-old regional collaborative, created after a Peirce Report called for the formation of a regional citizen-based group. Representing 14 counties, it acts as a convenor on regional issues. Its program includes regional leadership, regional indicators, expansion and use of electronic infrastructure for citizen dialogue and debate, and civic engagement. It was formed through the collaboration of four key regional organizations: Community Foundation, Charlotte Observer, Carolina's Partnership (an Economic Development Organization), and the Urban Institute at UNC Charlotte. The key regional issues involve smart growth, preparing for the New Economy (workforce development), and public education. Central Carolina Choices organized a Regional Environmental Summit that engaged a broad group of community, business, and environmental leaders in crafting a regional vision and prioritizing issues. Following the Summit, CCC created six action teams to develop plans to implement the vision. It also worked with Carolina's Partnership to create an economic development plan organized around clusters to focus on training and a regional transportation plan.

Although different groups take the lead on different issues, CCC is increasingly connecting regional leaders through the purposeful sharing of people in specific initiatives. CCC has become a leadership development mechanism that has drawn leaders from both the grassroots and traditional sources. Involving grassroots groups in visioning, developing common goals, and creating action teams, CCC has been able to broaden the base of civic engagement and increase commitment to implementation.

Central Carolina Choices is an example of a collaborative that is connecting its leadership with grassroots citizens to address regional challenges in more effective ways. It has become a leadership development mechanism for the region, thereby erasing the anonymity of leadership and helping to connect the dots in the conversation.

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## Moving Toward Regional Stewardship: Creating New Coalitions for Change

Regional leaders who see the need to connect the dots and create a new coalition for change tend to have certain common characteristics:

- They see the need for more *integrated regional approaches* that connect the New Economy, livable community, and social inclusion.
- They are *boundary crossers* who see the need to build alliances across traditional organizations and jurisdictions to address regional problems.
- They are *civic entrepreneurs* who apply the same entrepreneurial spirit to solving regional challenges that business entrepreneurs apply in building businesses.
- They have a *strong sense of place* and commitment to making the region a better place to live and work.
- They have a *long-term perspective* and understand the need to make things better for the next generation.

Some regions are beginning to call these leaders regional stewards. This language has been used in Silicon Valley, Austin, Chicago and Greater Washington, D.C. Regional stewardship combines the idea of “regional citizenship” with the “stewardship of place.”

Many of the regional examples that this scan describes point toward a regional stewardship that makes connections among the different regional conversations and promotes a more integrated approach to regional issues by combining top-down leadership with bottom-up civic engagement. A wide variety of engagement tools make this approach happen, including indicators, surveys, community town halls, visualization, scenarios, and simulations. All provide regional stewards with a better understanding of citizen perspectives while providing citizens new ways to become active in regional issues.

Regional stewards build new coalitions for change by pulling together support from the four following groups in the community in new ways:

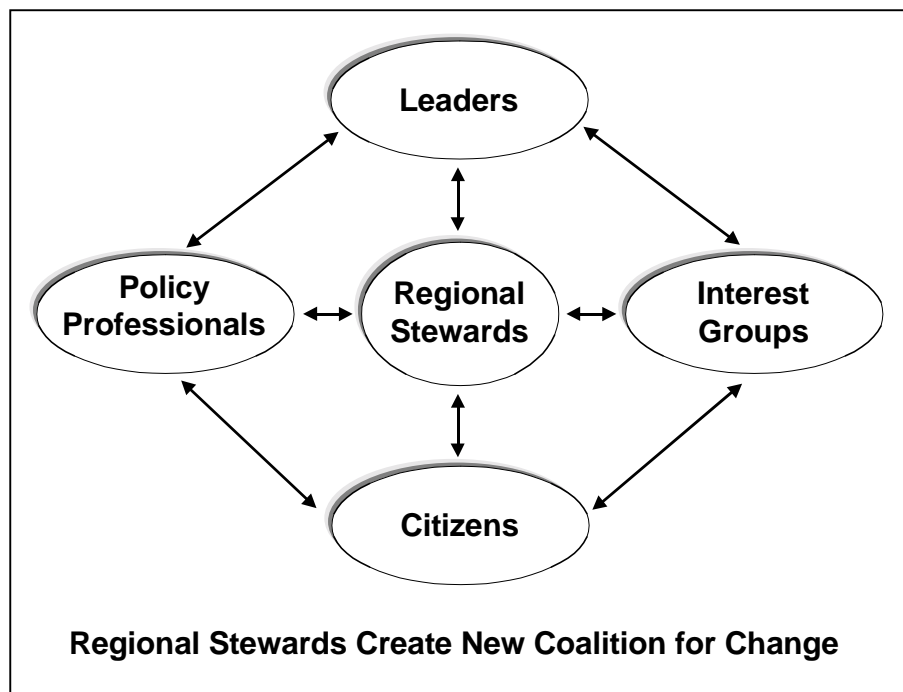
- *Leaders.* Because regional leaders come from many sources today and focus on different issues, we have seen that many regions suffer from an anonymity of leadership. Regional stewards are a subset of regional leaders who not only see the “bigger picture” and the need to create more connected leadership but are willing to recruit regional leaders to the cause.
- *Citizens.* Citizens can become more engaged today in regional issues through a variety of new information tools that help connect citizens directly with regional stewards. Reaching out to citizens and involving them directly can “democratize the planning process” and build grassroots support for regional action.
- *Interest groups.* Today, a variety of interest groups tend to dominate (and often gridlock) public-policy debate. For example, the Sierra Club will advocate for the environment, developers will advocate for development, labor will lobby for worker issues, and business will advocate for business interests. Although an important part of the political process, interest groups often stand in the way of significant regional change. Strong regional leadership with broad-based citizen support is necessary to change the normal interest-group dynamics. An effective regional process can recruit some members of interest groups to a broad coalition for change if the benefits are clear, and it may be the only way to break through gridlock.

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- *Policy professionals.* Ever since the progressive movement at the turn of the century tried to take politics out of government, policy professionals who serve in appointed positions and on commissions have taken center stage in state and local governments. Power and decision making often resides with experts—whether they are planning commissions, transportation boards, or government officials—rather than with citizens or civic leaders. An effective regional process will both recruit and engage policy professionals, seeking to involve them in larger coalitions for change.

FIGURE 2



The new dynamic in regions is the work of regional stewards who work to connect regional leadership with citizens to create new coalitions for change that can influence and motivate policy professionals to act while neutralizing the effect of competing interest groups in the policy process.

A variety of new structures and organizations are developing at the regional level to move toward regional stewardship. No single model will work in every region, and thus regions should try to learn from each other what works best and adapt those lessons in the most appropriate way to their situation.

What is new about some of this innovative regional approach seems to be the following:

- Civic engagement around choosing regional goals and strategic directions
- Strong private-sector leadership
- Collaboration between private- and public-sector leaders

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- A more integrated approach to regional development around the economy, the environment, and social inclusion
- Use of regional civic forums and organizations to influence the direction of public policy
- Accountability for measurable results.

## Conclusions

Regional stewards are searching for new ways to connect the dots because they are realizing that they need to address regional issues in a more integrated manner through new coalitions for change. In moving from planning to action, informal civic processes based on public-private-community partnerships naturally confront more formal government structures that allocate public resources and regulate physical development. How do civic governance and formal government work together in regions? What is the role of regional stewards in creating new models for innovative regional leadership? These fundamental questions are under discussion in regions across America. Regional leaders can learn about answers to these questions from different regional experiments under way today.

The movement toward regional stewardship suggests that new thinking will develop about the relationship of regions to state and federal government. As regions take more responsibility for developing more integrated approaches, their relationship to state and federal agencies should change. One experiment in federal-regional relations is the Partnership for Regional Livability, a partnership between federal agencies, private foundations, and regions that is pilot testing a “reverse RFP” in four regions: Atlanta, the Bay Area, Chicago, and Denver. In each region, leaders have developed a regional proposal and have requested, through a “reverse RFP,” the participation of appropriate federal agencies in their regionally driven effort. This new model of federal-regional collaboration could be a model for federal and regional participation in the future. What is necessary is a more bottom-up regional model rather than the more traditional top-down federal and state funding model. The regional experiments will require new experiments at the state and federal levels.