Good Urban Design Meets Good Governance

1. What is Governance?
2. Forms of Governance
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5. Local Governance
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What is Governance?

✧ Sovereign countries, communities, organisations and individuals depend on each other.

✧ Public issues and problems spill over boundaries.

✧ No one person, group, organisation, or even sovereign country, has the necessary power and authority to solve many problems.
What is Governance?

✧ Tension between individual freedom or sovereignty, and the collective good.

✧ Delivered through an agreed framework, formal and informal customs and practices, and a system of shared goals and values.

✧ Focuses on progressing ideas and views that advance the welfare of people, whilst ensuring that self interest does not dominate.
What is Governance?

✧ Is global, national, regional, local and organisational in context.

✧ Common characteristics:
  • Transparency of decision-making
  • Clarity of purpose and outcomes
  • Stakeholder engagement and participation
  • Capacity building
  • Ethical structures
Global Governance

✧ International Institutions
  • IMF, World Bank, WTO
  • UN
  • European Union
  • OECD
  • International Court of Justice

✧ International Agreements
Governance of the State:
- Generally has 2 parts:
  - Separation of Powers
    - Legislative, Executive and Judicial arms of government
    - Division of responsibilities between various levels of government
  - Supported by other conventions/institutions/principles
    - Freedom of the media
    - Rule of law
    - Representative democracy
National Governance

✧ Australian Governance: Federalism in Practice

• Confused Federal/State/local jurisdictions
• Separation of expenditure and revenue-raising responsibility – reduced accountability
• Horizontal and vertical fiscal imbalance
Push for $3bn to free up ports

Rudd plan to seize control of hospitals

Vaile vows to fast-track state transport projects

PM an ‘aspirational nationalist’

Lord mayors make bid for federal funds
Local Governance

✧ Significant reforms of local governments

✧ Growth in responsibilities
  • devolution
  • higher performance standards
  • community expectations
  • policy choice

✧ Models vary from country to country, state to state, city to city
Local Governance

✧ How should our cities be governed in the 21st century?

- Mature relations with Federal and State
- New models of governance and organisation
- Civic leadership supported
- Local, national and international identity
- Increased knowledge exchange and interaction amongst cities
- Investment in community engagement and understanding
- Greater emphasis on urban design
WHY WASN'T I TOLD ABOUT THIS WONDERFUL PLACE, AND HOW CAN I PREVENT OTHERS FROM DISCOVERING IT?
Of the places that we often compare ourselves with or like to think we might be compared with ... some of the great cities of the world have far more compact urban forms

Deputy Mayor David Hinchliffe
The Connection: Good Urban Design and Good Governance

✧ The welfare of people is dominant focus
✧ Local calibration of universal principles
  • Sense of place / unique identity / community
  • Social inclusion
  • Clarity of purpose and outcomes
✧ Commitment to excellent process, dialogue and ideas
✧ Require capacity-building
The GCCC Story

- 1995 Amalgamation of Albert Shire & Gold Coast Councils
- 1996 Establishment of UDAG (Urban Design Advisory Group)
- 1997 Council Endorsement of “Guiding Principles of Urban Design”
- 2003 Bonus provisions for Good Urban Design
- 2003 Establishment of City Architect Role
- 2007 EDAW Intern Program – A vision for Surfers Paradise 2007
- 2007 International Urban Design Conference
Adaptability and Versatility
Urban “Greenscape”
Main Beach North Oceanway
The Connection: Good Urban Design and Good Governance

What can we do to help?

- Invest heavily in educating and nurturing our local political decision makers
- Celebrate decisions which are consistent with good urban design
- “Brand” the processes which best deliver good urban design outcomes
- Participate in the re-design of democratic and corporate governance for our cities and organisations
- Build good urban design capacity
- Foster political / civic / community leadership
A final thought

“If you plan for cars and traffic, you get cars and traffic. If you plan for people and places, you get people and places.”

Fred Kent