Urban Shrinkage: The Canadian Perspective

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Summary

• Introduction
• Fertility Rates & Ageing Population
• Immigration
• Prevalence of Shrinking
• Elliot Lake
• Roots of shrinkage
• Research-based recommendations
• Hall & Hall
• Ongoing & Future Research

Abandoned Nursing Home, Flint MI Source: Warkentin
Introduction

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Global Population</th>
<th>% Live in Cities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1800</td>
<td>1 billion</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>6.5 billion</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2050</td>
<td>8.5 billion</td>
<td>75%</td>
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From 1950-2000, the number of shrinking cities increased by 330%.

- 1 in 4 cities worldwide
- 40% of European cities
- Canada vulnerable due to:
  - High level of urbanization
  - Large hinterland
  - Many communities economically dependent on extraction or harvesting of natural resources
Canadian Context
Canadian Context [cont.]

Canada 2011 Population – 34,528,000

- Rural Small Town: 18%
- Smaller Urban: 13%
- Other CMAs: 23%
- 6 Largest CMAs: 46%

% Growth 2006-2011

- Canada: 6.0%
- 6 Largest CMAs: 9.0%
- Other CMAs: 4.7%
- Smaller Urban: 3.4%
- Rural Small Town: 2.3%

Source: Statistics Canada, Population Estimates
What is a ‘Shrinking City’?

“a densely populated urban area with a minimum population of 10,000 residents that has faced population losses in large parts for more than two years and is undergoing economic transformations with some symptoms of a structural crisis.” (SCiRN 2007; Wiechmann 2008; Pallagst et al. 2009)
What causes urban shrinkage?

- Political Transformation
- Destruction
- Economic Restructuring
- Suburbanization
- Demographic Change
Fertility Rates & Ageing Population

- 1851: 7 births per woman
- 2009: 1.67 births per woman

Source: Statistics Canada, Population Projections
Ageing Population [cont.]

Median Age of Canada's Population

Source: Statistics Canada
Immigration

**Foreign Born as a Percentage of the Total Population**

- **Canada**
- **United States**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Canada</th>
<th>United States</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1910/11</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1920/21</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1930/31</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1940/41</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1950/51</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1960/61</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970/71</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980/81</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990/91</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000/01</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010/11</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Net International Migration as a % of Population**

- **United States 2000-2010**: 3.2%
- **Canada 2001-2011**: 6.5%

Source: Statistics Canada, Population Estimates and Projections
### Prevalence of Shrinking

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&lt;0 (Shrink)</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0-3.2 (No/Slow Growth)</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt;3.2 (Growth)</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Statistics Canada

- 2006-2011: 18%
- 2001-2006: 25%
- 1996-2001: 45%
Elliot Lake

- Established as planned community for uranium mining industry
- Peak population: 26,000 (1959)
- Low: 6,600 (1966)
- Retirement Living Program
  - Low rents and all maintenance requirements taken care of
  - Stabilized community with population of 11,500
Roots of Shrinkage

- Globalization and structural economic shifts
- Growth of service sector
- Concentration of knowledge-based jobs in large metropolitan areas
- Decline of the resource and manufacturing sectors

Abandoned house, Ontario. Source: Patrick LaRoque
Crisis of hinterland development

- Leadbeater (2009)
  - Increase in productivity in resource industries
  - Massive increases in concentration of both domestic and international capital
  - Major shifts in state policy resulting in cutbacks in employment and social problems
  - Environmental limits on production and consumption
  - Increased political resistance regarding sovereignty and land claims from Aboriginal peoples
Research-based Recommendations

Schatz (2010) concluded that planners can must follow principles of “good planning” – which include:

• Leaving behind the assumption of growth;
• Using processes that are strategic, with an emphasis on citizen participation;
• Adopting a balanced approach in addressing the physical, economic, environmental and social needs of the community; and
• Changing the role they play in the community (pg. 316)
Recommendations [cont.]

In response to the crisis of hinterland development, Leadbeater concluded:

- Lowering the capacity of transnational corporations to externalize their social costs;
- Becoming more stringent with policy regarding corporate tax breaks;
- A redistribution of power toward communities and labour to address the “subordinate power relations of communities to resource corporations”
Hall & Hall (2008)

- 11 years of 8 Canadian planning journals
- Growth overwhelmingly presented as expected and normal, even in cases of decline
- Pressing need for research
  - Both shrinking, no growth and slow-growth
  - To assist policy-makers, planners and communities in planning for decline and to “tell the story of these places in such a way that allows them to create alternative visions of possible development trajectories” (pg. 14)
- Literature on Canadian urban shrinkage repeats and reinforces the assumption that quantitative growth is the only acceptable response to decline
Research Questions

- What planning strategies to maintain or improve the quality of life of remaining residents are being realized successfully in shrinking cities?
- How can smaller shrinking cities adapt successful planning strategies used by their larger counterparts?
- Can the literature on growth and growth modelling be adapted to the shrinking context? If so, how?
Thank You

Questions?