"An Assessment of the Potential for Regionally Integrated Tourism
Planning: A Southern Alberta Case Study"

by

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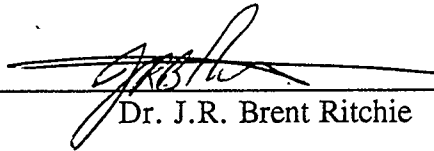
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ABSTRACT

"An Assessment of the Potential for Regionally Integrated Tourism Planning:
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prepared in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the M.E.Des. degree
in the Faculty of Environmental Design,
The University of Calgary

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This Master's Degree Project (MDP) critically examines the potential for regional tourism planning in the Chinook Country tourist zone, located in southwestern Alberta. The project begins with a description of tourism planning and various views on the subject. This is followed by a brief history of tourism planning in Alberta. The ensuing investigation includes a description of the provincial government's "top-down" view of tourism planning 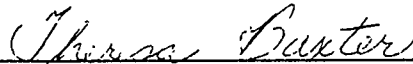in Alberta, followed by a community-based "bottom-up" view of tourism planning in the Chinook Country tourist zone. Finally, based on the information gathered, the prospects for integration of the "top-down" and "bottom-up" views at an intermediate regional level are discussed within the Chinook Country context.

It is concluded that: both communities and government representatives support regional tourism planning; regional tourism planning cannot be reduced to an exercise that follows a specific set of criteria to define regional tourism boundaries; regional tourism planning is required to appropriately address environmental concerns; regional tourism planning requires a strategic-interactive approach with communities at the centre of the planning process; a single entity called the Alberta Tourism Council should be formed from the consolidation of Alberta Tourism and the Tourism Industry Association of Alberta; and that communities should utilize the Alberta Tourism Council as a source of advice and information for community and regional tourism planning.

Key words: Tourism, tourism planning, regional planning, tourism policy, integrated planning, community tourism.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Intent of the Project

The intent of this Master's Degree Project (MDP) is to critically examine the potential for regional tourism planning in the Chinook Country tourist zone, located in southwestern Alberta. The project begins with a description of tourism planning and various views on the subject. This is followed by a brief history of tourism planning in Alberta. The ensuing investigation includes a description of the provincial government's "top-down" view of tourism planning in Alberta, followed by a community-based "bottom- up" view of tourism planning in the Chinook Country tourist zone. Finally, based on the information gathered, the prospects for integration of the "top-down" and "bottom-up" views at an intermediate regional level will be discussed within the Chinook Country context. The term "regional", for the purposes of the case study explored in this research, is used to indicate a geographic area that may range in size from that defined by an inter-municipal pairing or grouping, or a census consolidated subdivision, based on rural municipalities, to the entire Chinook Country Tourist Zone.

1.2 Tourism and Chinook Country

Arguably Chinook Country offers the most diverse range of tourism products of all the 14 tourism zones in Alberta. Historically, the tourism product was primarily focused on the natural beauty and scenery of Waterton Lakes National Park (the Canadian half of the Glacier/Waterton International Peace Park). Today, while Waterton and the Rocky Mountains continue to be major tourist draws in Chinook Country, attractions based on the historic past of the area have emerged with the development of major cultural interpretive centres (such as Head-Smashed-In Buffalo Jump) by the provincial government.

These and other recent developments in Alberta (such as the Tyrell Museum of Paleontology at Drumheller in an adjacent tourist zone) have created the basis for a potentially much stronger tourism industry in Chinook Country. In fact, the development of major attractions seems to have greatly out-paced the development of other necessary tourist services and facilities. Potential also exists for the future development of other attractions on a variety of scales. Indeed, the provincial government has plans to develop at least two more major interpretive centres in Chinook Country (Smith, Pers. Comm.).

Given the recent past and future plans, it would seem imperative to ensure that maximum provincial and community benefit is derived from the tourism industry development. A comprehensive approach appears desirable to capitalize on other development opportunities and to ensure that the necessary infrastructure and services required by tourists are provided. The spatial relationship between attractions, communities, services, and facilities must be considered by all relevant parties.

Chinook Country has a large rural population with small towns and villages being the predominant community type. Given the fact that their individual "zone of influence" tends to be small (except for Lethbridge, the only city), a broader, spatially integrated approach may be both desirable and difficult to achieve. The thrust of the present exercise is to explore the appropriateness, feasibility, and implementation aspects of an intermediate, regionally-integrated, approach to tourism planning in Chinook Country.

1.3 The Concerns

The three main industries in Alberta are petroleum, agriculture and tourism. Of these "...*tourism is the only one which has shown steady growth in revenue and employment during the past five years*" (Ritchie, 1988). As such tourism is generally seen as being for the public

good, and our government's role has appropriately shifted from a preoccupation with promotion and marketing to include more effort in planning and coordination (Murphy, 1983a). Greater emphasis on planning has arisen out of the realization that while tourism holds great potential for improving local socio-economic and cultural well-being, it also has the potential to destroy the natural environment and local socio-economic fabric.

Integrated tourism planning has been lacking due to the fragmented nature of the industry and the large number of interest groups involved. As Bloomfield and Hoole (1981) describe the situation, "the individual developer or operator frequently does not possess the time, resources, and therefore, inclination to consider the best location for his development". The connection of attractions to other attractions and services is often overlooked. Other government departments (such as those responsible for parks or culture) may be so preoccupied with local programming of a particular facility that its impacts on neighbouring communities are forgotten. In light of such disjointed efforts, there would appear to be some need for government to ensure the provision of a planning and coordination framework for tourism-related activities.

Although there is now general agreement that public sector planning for tourism development is desirable, differing views are held regarding what geographic scale or scales are most appropriate for such planning. Gunn (1979) has suggested that the various levels of government need to improve internal communication in developing travel- and tourism-related programs, and that local planning and development are best done in the context of regional planning. At the same time, other authors such as Haywood (1988) and Murphy (1983b and 1988) have stressed the need to bring tourism planning down to the community level.

These and other views are explored in greater detail in the literature review (Chapter 3). The following chapter provides a detailed description of the methodological approach used in this project.

CHAPTER 2: METHODOLOGY

The methodology employed in this research project had four main thrusts. The information sought in each section is used to investigate the usefulness of explicit tourism planning in the public domain and to build towards an appreciation of the case for and against explicitly **regional** tourism planning.

2.1 Literature Review

The first part of the methodology is a literature review of tourism planning. The literature review was employed to ascertain if tourism **planning** (as distinct from tourism **development**, which can occur without public planning) is important and to determine the current state of knowledge regarding tourism planning methodologies, issues, perspectives and trends.

2.2 Review of Provincial Tourism Policies and Plans

Second, government documents were reviewed and a series of unstructured interviews was conducted with key officials within Alberta Tourism. The purpose of this component of the methodology was to determine the extent of past and present tourism policy-making and planning activities in the province. Much of the information pertaining to past and present policies and plans was available in government documents. However, the unstructured interviews with Alberta Tourism officials helped to provide the rationale for the evolution of policy and planning approaches throughout the history of the Planning Division of Alberta Tourism.

2.3 Tourism Profile of Chinook Country

Third, with respect to the Chinook Country tourist zone, specific census data were amassed and a content analysis of the CTAPs in Chinook Country was undertaken to create a community-based tourism policy profile of the area. Since the focus of the research is a case study of Chinook Country, it was determined that a descriptive analysis of the area was needed. In particular, a content analysis of the existing Chinook Country CTAPs seemed important to determine individual community perceptions of the need for, or the importance of, joint tourism efforts, between communities, on a regional scale. The contents of these plans were examined to determine the degree of concern given to a regional or supra-community view of tourism development by communities. The regional concerns were divided into two groups: those that explicitly mention "regional" or "cooperative" efforts; and those that are not explicitly mentioned as such, yet have obvious implications that go beyond the local community.

2.4 Semi-structured Questionnaire Interviews

Fourth, representatives from 16 Chinook Country communities (that had prepared a CTAP) and from the provincial department of Tourism's Planning Division were surveyed, using semi-structured questionnaires, to determine regional tourism planning concerns from the "bottom-up" and from the "top-down" respectively. The provincial government questionnaire, administered in-person to Alberta Tourism officials, contained 9 semi-structured questions (Appendix 1) designed to probe the respondent for information regarding their perception of regional tourism planning. Respondents (listed in Appendix 2) were queried about: their branch's mandate and any regional dimensions to their work; the usefulness of regional tourism planning and the usefulness of the existing zone boundaries for regional tourism planning; appropriate criteria for defining regional boundaries for tourism planning; and the appropriate institutional framework for regional tourism planning.

The community questionnaire, administered in-person to representatives of 16 Chinook Country communities (there are 56 communities in total), comprised of 16 semi-structured questions (Appendix 3) designed to solicit views regarding regional tourism planning. The sample of 16 communities (Appendix 4) was drawn from the 30 communities that had completed CTAPs (Chinook Country has 56 communities in total). The sampling criteria were three-fold:

o   first, each community selected had to have completed a CTAP (to indicate an active interest in tourism, and hence the likelihood of thoughtful opinions regarding the usefulness of regional tourism planning);

o   second, the subset of communities as a whole was selected to be broadly representative of the geographic area covered by Chinook Country;

o   third, the subset of communities as a whole was selected to represent all types of communities that had completed a CTAP (city, town, village, county, municipal district, Indian reserve).

The individual interviewed for each community was the chairman of the Tourism Action Committee (TAC) because the TAC is supposed to include representatives from all interest groups in a community (private sector, public sector, and special interest groups) and it was, therefore, felt that this person would be the best informed and most aware of the views of the community as a whole.

Once again, the objective of the interviews was to explore the notion of regional tourism planning from the local community perspective. The first five questions explored the perception of tourism within the community, including positive and negative impacts and the usefulness of explicit tourism **planning** to enhance and avoid/mitigate these respectively. In particular, respondents were asked if they felt their community was part of a larger tourist region. If the response was positive, questions were then used to determine their perception of the region

(geographically, thematically, administratively, etc). The subsequent two questions probed if it would be useful to cooperate with other communities in the region, to attract tourists, and if it was likely that the other communities would be willing to do so. The remaining questions focused on the logistics of regional tourism planning, and included: the advantages and disadvantages; the barriers that might be encountered; the criteria for defining regions; and the organization responsible for taking the lead role.

CHAPTER 3: LITERATURE REVIEW OF TOURISM PLANNING

3.1 Introduction

Before examining tourism planning in Alberta, it is informative to review the current literature. Former research findings in tourism planning and policy formulation establishes the necessary background to work from, and provides some useful insights as regards the Alberta situation.

It is first necessary to clarify what is meant by "tourism" and what is meant by "planning". This paper will use Gunn's (1988) definition of tourism which, simply stated, includes "all travel with the exception of commuting". Planning, in this paper, refers to public sector (or governmental) activities rather than private sector activities and as such is considered to be "pro bono publico" or for the public good and in the public domain. Planning provides the link between specialized knowledge and particular action, in the context of intervention to effect intended change. It is seen by the author as being inherently political in nature, involving negotiation and compromises between a variety of interest groups to develop basic goals and objectives used to guide future actions.

The focus is on "planning" as defined above, which often involves, but is not synonymous with, "development". Tourism development can occur with or without planning. Many of the past tasteless and unsustainable tourist developments were due to a lack of explicit tourism planning policies and procedures with little or no national, regional or local public domain planning (Edgell, 1987).

It is also important to clarify that planning in this paper refers to planning for community or regional development and therefore has goals beyond maximizing economic return to the industry. Planning should integrate tourism development with other sectors of the economy,

and with social welfare such as employment, education and health. Tourism planning may even be used as a tool of social policy that more equitably distributes wealth (Andronicou, 1983).

It is extremely difficult to draw any meaningful distinctions between tourism **planning** and **policy formulation** by reviewing the literature. Mill and Morrison (1985) appear unclear: first stating that "tourism policy represents the basic foundation from which more specific ... plans are developed"; but later when describing their view of the tourism planning process, speak of "policy-making" and "policy objectives". Van Doorn's (1982) perspective is just the reverse, advocating that planning be the "basis of policy-making". Inskeep (1988) sees policy formulation as a component of tourism planning. Other authors discuss tourism planning with very little or no mention of tourism policy (Getz, 1986 and McIntosh and Goeldner, 1986), while others do the converse by limiting their discussion to tourism policy (Edgell, 1987).

The author accepts the notion that tourism **policies** are broader statements of intent from which more specific tourism **plans** are developed. For example, in the Community Tourism Action Plan Manual (1988), communities are encouraged to initially formulate a tourism policy:

> *"Tourism will be encouraged within (community name) and its surrounding area in ways that will attract more tourists, increase their length of stay, increase the amounts of money they spend here, and ensure that any adverse social, economic, and/or environmental effects are minimized as a result of activities to improve tourism."*

The policy then is used to guide and support the development of more specific action plans. This is not to say that tourism policies cannot be more specific than the aforementioned example, but they are still generally the basis for more specific tourism plans. In some cases tourism planning (the activity of creating tourism plans) may not be undertaken. Rather, the process may halt after policy-making/formulation (the activity of creating policy). Similarly, one can envisage a case where the policy-formulation step is skipped and activities are focused directly on tourism planning in a comparative policy vacuum.

It is increasingly being realized that the tourism industry, not unlike other industries, can be, or is, an important sector of the economy and as such should be important to governments in their economic development planning. However, the economic benefits of developing the industry must be weighed against the possible degradation of human and natural resources (McIntosh and Goeldner, 1986). Hence, the need for explicit tourism **planning**, instead of tourism development in a public planning vacuum.

3.2 The Tourism Industry/System

The tourism industry or system has some very unique aspects that have important implications for planning and policy formulation. Mathieson and Wall (1982) conceptualize the tourism system as having three major components: a **dynamic element** which involves travel to a destination or set of destinations; a **static element** which involves the stay in the destination; and a **consequential element** representing the effects of the first two elements.

Perhaps the most unique aspect of the industry is that the product which it produces is "invisible", an experience or memory (Mill and Morrison, 1985). The specific product that a particular destination offers will, therefore, vary according to the experience that is being created. For planning purposes, this means that each destination will have different goals and objectives that need to be met in order to create the desired tourism product.

Another aspect of the industry that is important to planning is the evolution of a tourist area described by Butler (1980) in figure 3.1.
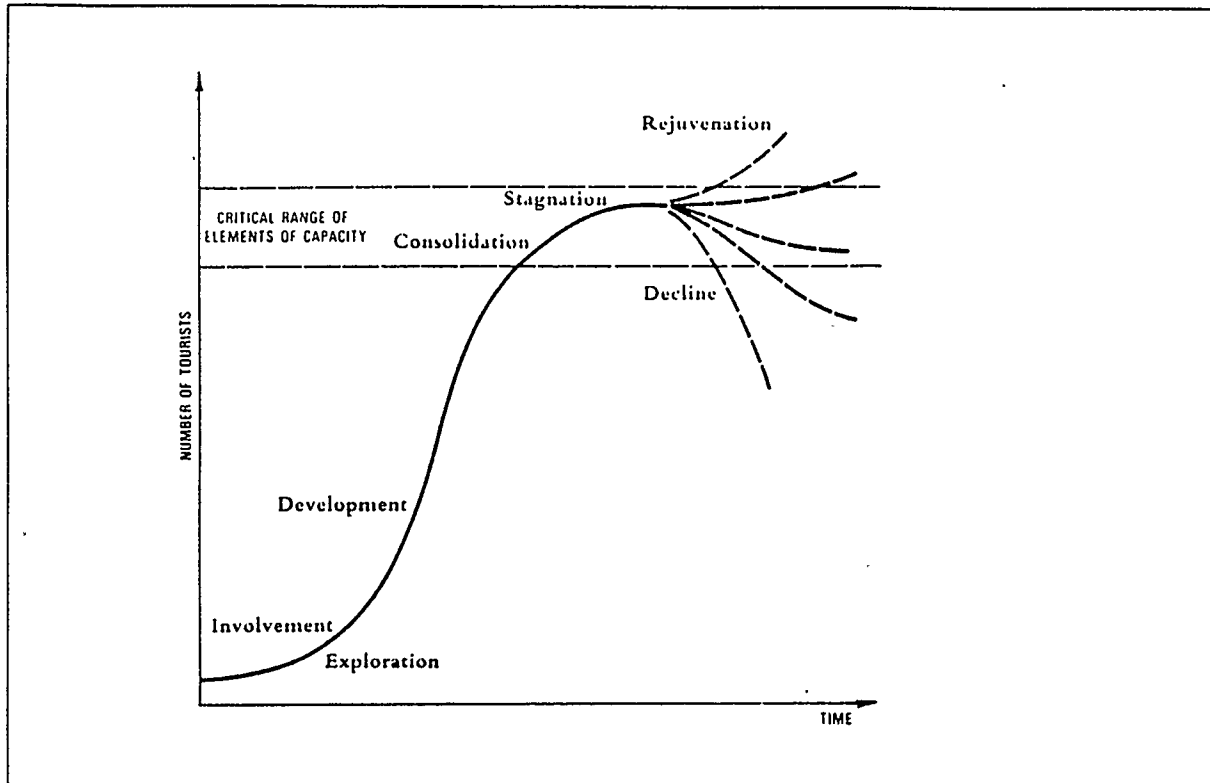
Figure 3.1   Hypothetical evolution of a tourist area.
Source: Butler (1980).

As Butler describes it:

> *"Visitors will come to an area in small numbers initially, restricted by lack of access, facilities, and knowledge (**exploration**). As facilities are provided and awareness grows, visitor numbers will increase (**involvement**). With marketing, information dissemination, and further facility provision, the area's popularity will grow rapidly (**development**). Eventually, however, the rate of increase in visitor numbers will decline as levels of carrying capacity are reached (**consolidation and stagnation**). As the attractiveness of the area declines relative to other areas, because of overuse and the impacts of visitors, the actual number of visitors may also eventually **decline**."*

The alternative **rejuvenation** stage described by Butler (1980) is virtually unattainable unless there is a complete change in tourist attractions. Stough and Feldman (1983) add that by the time policy makers in most areas realize that the tourism industry needs to be managed, it is too late.

Chinook Country exhibits characteristics that indicate it is in the **late involvement** stage or **very early development** stage. The number of facilities and attractions (discussed in Chapter 5) are rapidly on the increase. Promotional efforts as well as awareness of Chinook Country attractions seem to be growing. Residents are excited about the possibilities of tourism, and negative impacts are not yet being experienced.

The costs and benefits of the tourism industry (to the destination area) are quite well known (D'Amore, 1983; Krippendorf, 1982; Lawrence et al, 1988; Mathieson and Wall, 1982; Meleghy et al, 1985; Milman and Pizam, 1988; Pigram, 1983) but not easily quantifiable, particularly those that are non-economic. Stough and Feldman (1983) have outlined the major impacts (Table 3.1) and note that the industry appears attractive because the benefits of the industry begin almost immediately. The negative impacts (costs) usually arise later and intensify as the industry matures.

Table 3.1   Major tourism impacts at the local and regional levels
Source: Stough and Feldman (1983)

Benefits	Costs
Source of employment	Most jobs are low paying
Source of income	Much of the return on tourism investment may be leaked out of the local economy
Source of tax revenue	Seasonal - may frequently be a high risk industry
May diversify economic base	Competition for services between locals and outsiders especially where seasonality is a factor
Expands amenities for locals	Increased land values may stress locals especially those on fixed incomes
May make area more visible	Tourists may disproportionately increase service demands due to air, water and noise pollution
-	Encroachment on private property
	Erosion of host culture
	Ecological demands, eg. lowering water availability in costal areas due to draw down on ground water

The majority of communities in Chinook Country have already demonstrated a particularly strong attraction to tourism development, judged by their speedy uptake of CTAP opportunities (page 67). However, a minority of communities have avoided actively pursuing tourism development, suggesting some concern over negative impacts now or in the future.

Since tourism development in Chinook Country is still in the early phases, the opportunity exists for thoughtful planning to help avoid some of the pitfalls associated with haphazard development. While all of the impacts described by Feldman are important to monitor, the problem of seasonality may very well be the most serious problem (at least initially), due to the northern climate and the lack of readily identifiable winter attractions in the prairie area.

3.3 Tourism Planning Overview

Tourism planning *"as a distinct activity ... is a relatively new specialization in development planning"* and is rarely referenced in the general planning literature (Inskeep, 1988). Similarly, in the tourism literature the notion of public sector planning has not been evidenced until recently. Formal tourism planning began primarily in France and the United Kingdom in the early 1960s, however, since the late 1960s-early 1970s Canada has been at the forefront of the field (Mill and Morrison, 1985). Oddly enough, in the United States, where 46 of 50 states list tourism as one of their top three industries, little coordinated tourism planning has taken place (Richter, 1985; Ronkainen and Farano, 1987).

Initially, tourism planning was undertaken almost solely for the purpose of maximizing economic growth (Getz, 1986) as evidenced by the work of authors such as Bargur and Arbel (1976), Gearing et al (1976), and Moheb (1977). Public sector responsibilities were seen as being the provision of infrastructure, regulation and control, and possibly marketing (Bond and Ladman, 1976). More current views of tourism planning emphasize the need for placing more importance on environmental and socio-cultural factors (Getz, 1986; Krippendorf, 1982; and Spanoudis, 1982). This has led to the notion of "soft tourism" as opposed to "hard tourism" (Table 3.2).

**Table 3.2   Development strategies for "hard" versus "soft" tourism
Source: Krippendorf (1982)**

Hard Tourism	Soft Tourism
Development without planning	Planning before development
Project thinking	Concept thinking
Each community plans for itself	**Centralized planning for larger areas**
Indiscriminate development	**Concentrate development on particular areas**
Haphazard and scattered building	Conserve land, build in concentration, keep open areas
Exploit especially valuable landscapes particularly intensively	**Conserve especially valuable landscapes (reserves)**
Create new building-stock build new bed spaces	Improve use of existing building stock Exploit existing bedspaces
Build for indefinite demand	Fix limits on expansion
Develop tourism in all areas	**Develop tourism only in suitable areas and where local population available**
Tourism development left to outside concerns	Opportunity for decision-making and participation by local population
Utilize all available labour (also outsiders)	**Development planned according to indigenous labour potential**
Consider only economic advantages	Weigh up all economic, ecological and social advantages and disadvantages (costs-benefits)
Regard farming population only as landowners and tourist labour	Preserve and encourage agriculture
Leave social costs to be paid by society	Leave costs to be paid by perpetrators
Favour private transport	Encourage public transport
Provide facilities for maximum demand	Provide facilities for average demand
Remove natural obstacles	Preserve natural obstacles
Urban architecture	Local architecture (building design and materials)
General automation of tourist resorts	Selective technical development, encouragement of non-technical tourism forms

It is of particular interest to note that Krippendorf supports centralized planning for large areas as characteristic of "soft" tourism, while he deems the action of communities planning for themselves reflective of "hard" tourism. In this context, the provincial Community Tourism Action Plan (CTAP) program (that Chinook Country communities are involved in) would be viewed as a hard approach to tourism development if there were no further planning on a regional scale.

The concept of "soft" tourism described by Krippendorf (1982) seems to represent many of the principles that might be arrived at if one were to **apply the concept of sustainable development to tourism**. While the principles of sustainable development have largely been applied to management of our environment, the concept may also be viewed as applicable to our culture, society and economy. This concept complements the phenomenon of tourism which feeds on the combination of the local environment, culture, society and economy to create unique experiences. The destruction or change of any of these elements ultimately changes the experiences that draw tourists. Because **the experience is the product**, careful management of these elements should be a concern of the tourism industry as well as the local community or region.

If tourism is to be a **sustainable benefit** to a community or region (and the associated tourism businesses), it must enhance at least one of these elements without causing significant negative impact to any of the other elements. If tourism fails in this regard, the stakeholders will not benefit in the long run. It is therefore of benefit to both the host communities and the tourism industry to apply the principles of sustainable development to the planning and monitoring of tourism development.

To effectively apply sustainable development principles to tourism planning and management requires an understanding of the level of tolerable impact and a commitment to ensuring that it

is not exceeded. In environmental terms this limit is referred to as **carrying capacity**. Williams (1987) described carrying capacity statements as being both prescriptive and descriptive. They are **prescriptive** because they assign a preferred type and amount of use to a tourism site. They are **descriptive** in that they describe relationships between the intensity of use and the quality of environment or tourist experience.

Three different concepts of carrying capacity have recently been related to tourism development (Williams, 1987):

> 1) **Physical/biological carrying capacity** which evaluates components of the physical environment and the amount of use these can tolerate;

> 2) **Management-based carrying capacity** that determines the level of tourist activity that is *"efficient and safe for users given the human and fiscal resources available to the managing agency"*; and

> 3) **Psychological carrying capacity** estimates the most pleasurable density of tourists from a tourist's perspective.

The use of these concepts of carrying capacity as management tools in tourism planning is still quite crude and non-integrative in nature (Williams, 1987). However, even Williams' three types of carrying capacity omit consideration of the **socio-cultural carrying capacity of the host community or region**. From a community development perspective, it seems important to ensure that local people are supportive of tourism and continue to see it as beneficial to the development of their community and way of life.

Determination of the socio-cultural, physical/biological, management-based and psychological carrying capacities are quite difficult if subjectivity is to be minimized. Indeed, if tourism is to be developed on a major scale, relative to community size, then investment in extensive carrying capacity research may be necessary. In other cases less intensive efforts may suffice.

Once carrying capacities have been established for various attributes, it will be important to monitor these to ensure they are not exceeded. For example, socio-cultural impacts might be measured with an annual survey of resident attitudes towards tourism development and activity.

Clearly, if the costs of tourism development and activity (from socio-cultural, environmental and economic perspectives) begin to outweigh the benefits, it is no longer a sustainable activity. Rather than attempting to react to these conditions once they arise, it would be preferable to establish carrying capacities that could then be used to guide tourism planning and management for sites, communities and regions.

3.4 Scales of Tourism Planning

Tourism planning and policy formulation within a country can occur at three basic levels: nationally, regionally, and locally. There seems to be consensus in the literature that the same tourism planning processes can be used at any of these levels, although few case study discussions focus on applying the processes nationally. Most discussion is polarized into those that see tourism planning as primarily a regional activity (ie. beyond the individual community level) and those that see it as a local or community activity.

Some (Gunn, 1988; Inskeep, 1988; Mill and Morrison, 1985; and Smith, 1987) suggest that tourism planning ought to occur in a hierarchical order progressing from the national to the local level ("top-down"), where the plans and policies created at higher levels guide planning activities at lower levels. Smith (1987) explains that strong variations in the tourism resource base are indicative of the need for an explicit regional perspective. Gunn (1988) believes that "tourism must have a regional planning perspective" because tourism is geographically more extensive than most social and economic activities, and therefore demands a larger-scale concern.

Others, (Haywood, 1988; Murphy, 1988; and Alberta Tourism, 1988a) disagree and feel that local concerns should form the basis for policy formulation at the regional and then national level. This "bottom-up" process of tourism planning is described by Murphy (1983) as the "ecological model of tourism development" (Figure 3.2).
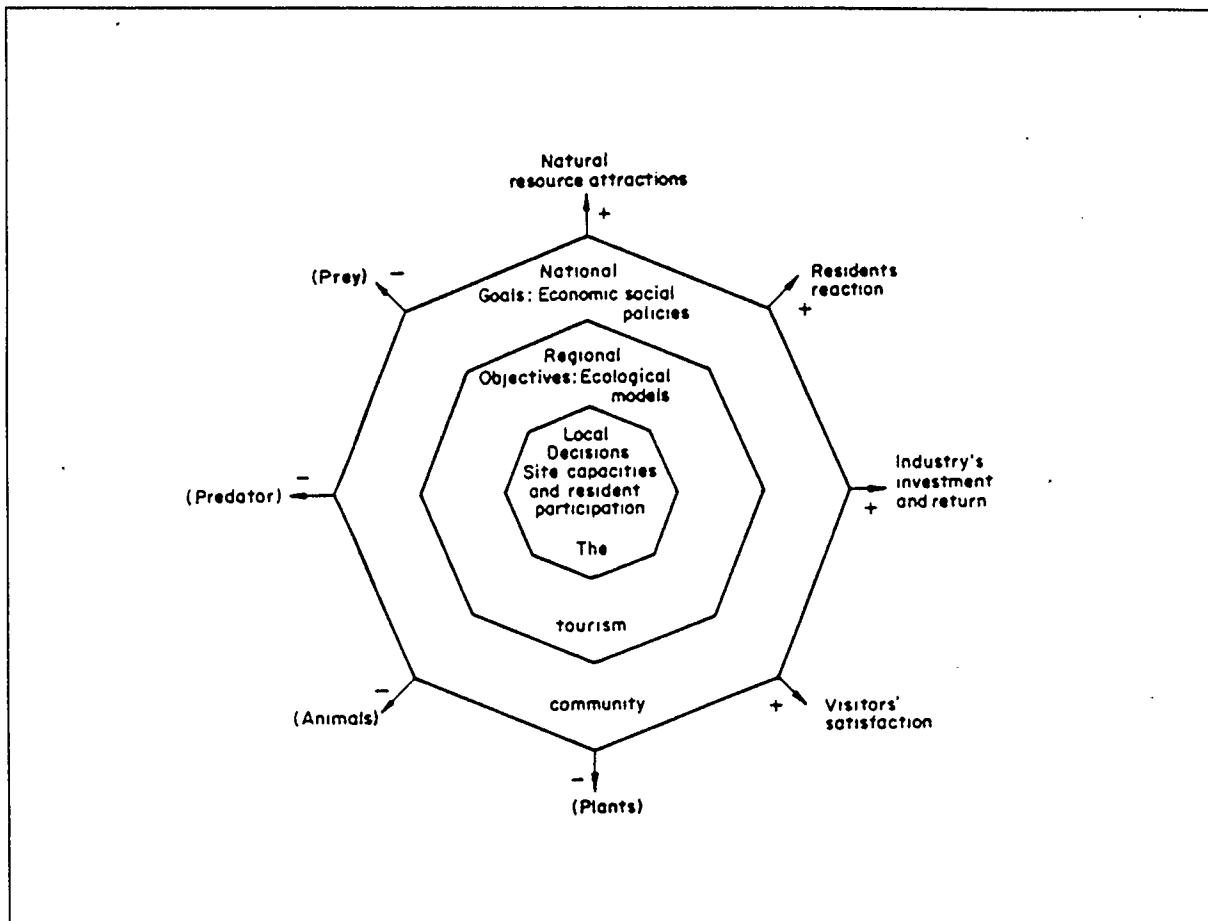
Figure 3.2   Ecological model of tourism development.
            Source: Murphy (1983).

Keller (1987) notes that tourism development in small towns or rural areas results in an exploitive "centre-periphery conflict" relationship, where the majority of tourism industry benefits are lost to economic leakages, imported labour and external control over decision-making (not unlike the problems experienced by developing countries). To avoid these negative

consequences, he proposes a theoretical model that calls for greater maintenance of control over decision-making by the peripheral authorities; and industrial development on a scale within the scope of local resources. This approach encourages development **from below** (community-based and people-centred) rather than production-centred development.

It would seem that consideration of both the local and regional scales are important to successful sustainable development of the tourism industry. Tourism planning must be sensitive to the community because as Murphy (1980) puts it, *"the industry uses the community as a resource, sells it as a product and in the process affects the lives of everyone"*. However, Fridgen (1987) points out that for smaller communities, regional cooperative efforts in tourism planning, development, and promotion would be practical and more efficient. In light of these facts, perhaps the best strategy would be to initially identify the goals and objectives at the community level and then, through a political process, modify, combine and coordinate them so that regional integration is achieved.

3.5 Tourism Planning Support Structures

A salient feature of a tourism planning approach is the institutional framework proposed for ensuring the integration of planning efforts. The tourism literature has little to offer regarding appropriate **institutional support structures** for tourism planning. Discussions of key institutions are kept broad with references such as "the public sector" or "the government" and "the private sector" or "industry". The lack of clearly-defined institutional support structures is perhaps reflective of the industry's fragmented nature where little potential exists for the development of an umbrella organization that includes all private sector interests or all government departments with an impact on tourism.

From a planning perspective, the province of Alberta has a number of **regional planning commissions.** However, these commissions are not major elements in the provincial government structure (they focus on land use), and they do not really serve to coordinate the activities of government on a regional basis. At the same time there exist **provincial tourism organizations** such as the Tourism Industry Association of Alberta (TIAALTA) that acts in the interest of the private sector with a zone structure. However, there are presently no organizations in Alberta dedicated to regional tourism planning.

By contrast, the Province of British Columbia (1988) has announced a major **regionalization initiative** whereby efforts are now focused on creating sustainable economic development strategies. To facilitate this activity the government has established the **Ministry of Regional Development** and appointed Ministers of State for each of the nine regions in British Columbia. As part of this initiative, **regional tourism action plans** are to be created for each region by the Ministry of Tourism and The Provincial Secretary, via regional development liaison officers (from the Ministry of Regional Development) already working with representative groups in each region (B.C. Ministry of Tourism and Provincial Secretary, 1989).

In British Columbia the intent is that the regional tourism action plans will be used by communities to guide the development of their own tourism development objectives. Prior to the regionalization initiative, and the decision to undertake regional tourism action plans, a tourism development manual was produced to assist communities in developing their own local plans (B.C. Ministry of Tourism, Recreation and Culture, 1986). The new Ministry of Regional Development will likely provide a strong regional support structure for tourism planning in British Columbia, and should lead to a better integration of tourism planning with economic development planning on a regional basis.

3.6 The Tourism Planning Process

The tourism planning process is generally seen as the application of a general planning model to tourism. However, opinions differ over which planning model to apply. Many authors advocate the use of the traditional "rational" or "comprehensive" planning model, however, more recently "strategic planning" has gained increasing recognition. A seven-step tourism planning process that uses the comprehensive planning model is outlined by Inskeep (1988):

Step 1. Study Preparation. The government specifies what it wants studied, creates a terms of reference, and a multidisciplinary team is organized.

Step 2. Determination of Objectives. The study team determines the objectives for tourism development.

Step 3. Survey. An inventory and evaluation of existing and potential tourist attractions. The primary attractions are identified and logical tourism development regions are identified.

Step 4. Analysis and Synthesis. Tourism markets are analyzed based on the market survey of present tourists if some tourism already exists, the existing and potential major attractions of the area, distance and cost of travel from the market countries, the objectives of tourism development, and the relative attributes of competing destinations. Opportunities and constraints are identified.

Step 5. Policy and Plan Formulation. Alternative policies and plans are formulated and evaluated against the tourism objectives.

Step 6. Recommendations. The alternative selected is detailed and implementation techniques are recommended. Project phasing, zoning regulations, conceptual land use plans and other details relevant to the concept are outlined.

Step 7. Implementation and Monitoring. Implementation is coordinated. On-going monitoring and regular plan updates allow for changes in policies and plans.

Although the rational or comprehensive model appears to be methodologically sound, its ideology has increasingly come under attack by both academics and practitioners. It espouses the notion that planning is an intrinsically technical and apolitical activity, and that there is an unitary public interest. In reality, planning involves power-brokering and resource allocation, the expressions of which are intrinsically distributional and thus political (Kiernan, 1982). The Chinook Country Tourism Destination Study (Alberta Tourism, 1984), a zone-wide tourism planning process (discussed in chapter 4) initiated but never completed, was based on the rational comprehensive planning model.

Although more politically conscious comprehensive planning processes involve some form of public participation, the involvement of the public and affected interest groups often occurs too late in the process to have a major bearing on the outcome. As a result plans tend to be largely prescriptions of what planners think "ought to happen". Lang (1988) espouses a more **interactive planning** approach in contrast with conventional comprehensive planning (Table 3.3). The need for an interactive planning approach arises from the realization that true integration requires all interests to be heard by all interested parties.

Table 3.3   Interactive planning vs conventional planning.
Source: Lang (1988)

Interactive Planning	Conventional Planning
Includes information-feedback, consultation and negotiation	Mostly information-feedback; may be some consultation
Integration occurs early on and throughout the planning process, with full range of stakeholders	Early interaction with implementors; affected interests not involved until late in the process
Assumes that open participation leads to better decisions	Assumes that better information leads to better decisions
Planner as value-committed advocate	Planner as value-neutral expert
Focuses on mobilization of support	Focuses on manipulation of data
Plan = what we agree to do	Plan = what we should do
Success measured by achievement of agreement on action, and by resulting change	Success measured by achievement of the plan's objectives

Meaningful interaction of the interested parties includes **information-feedback, consultation, collaboration and negotiation** and is most important in complex circumstances (described by Lang, 1988) where:

o   relevant information and knowledge needed to resolve complex development issues, rather than being possessed only by planners, are distributed among various agencies, groups and individuals;

o   plans cannot be implemented by one agency unilaterally;

o   the interests of participants are quite likely to be in some degree of conflict based on different values, perceptions and attitudes;

o   if agencies are to implement plans and undertake development projects successfully, the publics must have confidence and trust in the agencies and their planning processes; or

o   development strategies often require behaviourial change which may be easier to achieve if those expected to do the changing are involved in the planning.

Any one of the above points would be true in the instance of tourism planning. Therefore, an

interactive approach to tourism planning seems both highly desirable and necessary, especially as a means of achieving broad and deep public participation.

Most recently, the application of "strategic planning" to tourism has been advocated by Gunn (1988), and applied in Alberta (Jamieson et al, 1988) and Wales (Clarke, 1986). The strategic planning process (Figure 3.3) has been promoted as a planning tool at both the regional scale (Gunn, 1988) and the local (community) scale (Perks, 1986; MacDonald, 1989).

Strategic planning originated in the military and involves the evaluation of internal strengths and weaknesses (relative to the competition), external analysis of trends and environmental scanning. From this information, action-oriented and focused strategies are developed to strategically position the organization to capitalize on the future. The differences between conventional (comprehensive) planning and strategic planning are illustrated by Lang (1988) in Table 3.4.
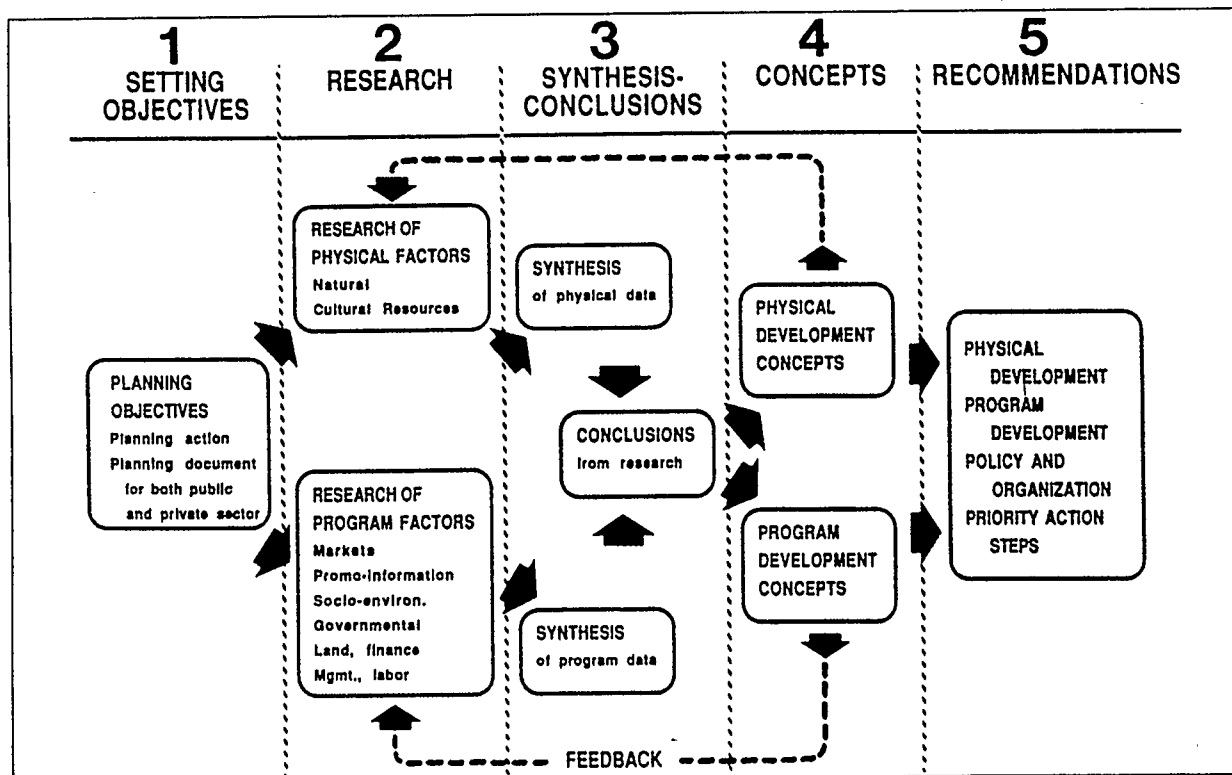
Figure 3.3   The strategic planning process.
            Source: Gunn (1988).

**Table 3.4   Strategic planning versus conventional planning.
Source: Lang (1988).**

Strategic Planning	Conventional Planning
Action-oriented; planning and implementation as a single process	Plan-oriented; planning separated from implementation
Oriented to the organization's mandate and its internal and external environment	Oriented to substantive issues; organizational issues are suppressed
Focused and selective	All-encompassing
Situational analysis includes examination of organization's values and critique of its performance	Organization's values not considered and its performance not examined critically
Environmental scan considers factors in external environment affecting objectives achievement	Environmental scan rarely done
Explicit mission statement, fully cognizant of implementation capability	Vague goals, not tested for consistency or implementability in shared action space
Proactive, with contingency planning	Proactive and reactive; no contingency planning
Strongly oriented to allocation of organizational resources; budget is the key integrator	Planning often separated from budgeting; land becomes the key integrator
Planning process is ongoing	Planning process is periodic
Builds capacity for planning and organizational learning	Capacity-building not an explicit objective
Values intuition and judgement highly	Values analysis highly

Strategic planning becomes an even more attractive option as resources become scarcer and the rapidity of change increases. Van Doorn (1982) has argued that to complement strategic planning, more emphasis must be placed on futures research and tourism forecasting. However, this view of strategic planning is not unlike traditional comprehensive planning in its non-interactive and technical approach.

Perhaps a more attractive approach would combine the important elements of strategic planning with the characteristics of an **interactive approach** (to solicit the input of business and the

public). Such a framework has not yet been proposed in the tourism literature; however, the concept has been put forward by Lang (1988) to further **planning for integrated development.** Lang (1988) criticizes incremental planning for its lack of integration and comprehensive planning for its *"attempt to be rational and all- encompassing"*. As an alternative, he offers an **integrative planning approach** that is "strategic" (action-oriented, focused, flexible and adaptive, and capacity-building) and "interactive" (provides for interaction with and among the stakeholders).

The Community Tourism Action Plan program is an example of a process that is both strategic and interactive in nature. The process is strategic because it forces communities to look at their tourism assets and liabilities and to come up with action plans that are realistic and achievable. The CTAP process is interactive because it relies on people from the local community to develop and implement the plan. As such, when examined from a process perspective, the CTAP appears to be exhibit characteristics of a soft approach to tourism development where opportunity exists for decision-making and participation by the local population.

Most overt tourism planning has been carried out through the institutional structures of centralized governments. These government structures have not changed significantly and still operate under the production logic of an industrial era. Korten (1984) suggests that as we move further into the post-industrial era, we require a fundamental rethinking of the **appropriate institutional structures** required to enhance our welfare and the sustainability of our actions. As an alternative to the **production-centred development** of the industrial era, Korten (1984) calls for a new focus on **people-centred development.** Three basic themes are central to the concept of people-centred development:

1) *"focusing public policy thought and action on the creation of **enabling settings** which encourage and support people's efforts to meet their own needs and to solve their own problems at individual, family, and community levels;*

2) *developing organizational structures and processes that function according to the principles of **self-organizing systems;***

3) *developing territorially organized production-consumption systems based on principles of **local ownership and control.** "* (Korten, 1984)

These concepts would complement a "soft" approach to tourism development. In the author's opinion, they represent policies that would be worthy of support, resulting in more socially and economically sustainable tourism development.

3.7 Summary

Tourism planning in the public sector is a recent phenomenon. It initially focused almost exclusively on maximizing the economic benefits (private sector profits) from the industry. Authors such as Baud-Bovy (1982) argue that tourism development planning efforts in the past have failed largely due to a lack of integration with the local social, cultural, political, economic and environmental circumstances. More recently, there has been increasing pressure for tourism planning to incorporate a greater sensitivity to environmental and socio-economic factors. Philosophies such as "soft tourism" are now becoming more commonplace.

Whether the appropriate scale for tourism planning is the community level or the regional level remains a highly debated issue. There does appear to be some recognition that **both** aspects are important (yet most tourism planning to date has been national or provincial, rather than community or regional).

Two different types of tourism planning process are currently being used. One type is based on the traditional "rational" or "comprehensive" (often called the "development model" in tourism literature) planning model. The other type is based on the "strategic planning" model. Regardless of the technique chosen for tourism planning, most feel that, for them to be successful, tourism planning must be better integrated with overall development policies and plans of the host community, region and country.

Tourism planning, to date, has been comparatively technocratic and insufficiently sensitive to the **public domain** concerns of the host community, region or country. A great deal of research is still required before the newly identified environmental and socio-cultural concerns become an integral part of tourism planning. A particularly critical void that needs to be filled, in the author's opinion, is that of meaningful public participation early on in the tourism planning process. While there is a great need for tourism planning to be more **strategic**, the process is political and must be recognized as such by actions that also foster widespread **interaction** between all stakeholders. Alberta's CTAP process may be considered such a strategic/interactive combination.

CHAPTER 4: TOURISM PLANNING IN ALBERTA

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the results of an investigation of tourism planning in Alberta. While all tourism planning activities are discussed, additional emphasis is placed on activities directly intended to guide tourism development at the regional (zone) and local (municipal) levels. This section will examine the nature of planning undertaken at each of these levels and determine how planning efforts are coordinated. The information in this chapter is drawn from Alberta Tourism policy and planning documents and semi-structured interviews with Alberta Tourism officials. Before proceeding to these analyses, a brief history of tourism in Alberta is provided for orientation purposes.

4.2 History of Tourism in Alberta (Government of Alberta, 1985)

The government of Alberta began modestly promoting tourism in the 1930s, but an explicitly endorsed departmental focus did not arise until 1945 when the Alberta Government Travel Bureau was formed as part of the new Department of Economic Affairs.

In 1962 a private sector tourism industry group known as the Canadian Rockies Tourist Association became the Alberta Tourist Association: the present-day equivalent of the Tourism Industry Association of Alberta (TIAALTA), established in 1972.

By the mid-1960s the Alberta Government Travel Bureau significantly expanded its marketing and promotions activities and created a geographic tourism zone system. The first seven tourist zones were established in 1965 by the Alberta Government Travel Bureau and expanded to the current fourteen in the 1970s. The Alberta Tourist Association felt that the tourism industry in

the province could not be effectively represented by a single organization (McIntyre, no date). The move to a zone system was supposed to improve private sector promotional efforts through public/private sector cooperation. During this same period, the Alberta Government Travel Bureau became part of the Department of Industry and Development as the result of a government reorganization.

In 1971 the Alberta Government Travel Bureau was reorganized and given a new name, Travel Alberta. With the new name came a new and more definitive mandate: *"to help streamline and improve marketing assistance, counselling and information services".*

In the mid-1970s visitor counts in the province increased dramatically and the travel industry revenues rose to half a billion dollars. Travel Alberta began to focus more heavily on research and planning. Programs were designed to *"ensure proper tourism facilities and services to take care of the expected growth of tourism".*

Travel Alberta (now called Alberta Tourism) continues to promote the province as a travel destination and works with the private sector in planning, personnel training and other industry improvement programs. The estimated annual revenue generated from the tourism industry was $2.3 billion in 1988 (Sparrow, 1988). Virtually all government departments are involved in tourism in some form, and all have helped shape it, but the most notable contributions have come from Alberta Recreation and Parks, and Alberta Culture and Multiculturalism.

4.3 Provincial Tourism Planning

Prior to 1979, the organizational basis for tourism did not encompass any specific planning provisions, especially in regards to the public domain. Rather, there was a private-sector, industry focused organizational base that emphasized marketing and promotion. In 1979 the

province launched its first explicit tourism planning initiative called the "Tourism Destination Area Planning Program". The initiative was primarily a response to the "intense pressures being placed on the national parks for more facilities in Banff and Jasper" (Bloomfield and Hoole, 1981). To this end, the program sought to develop and promote alternative destinations within the province, since National Parks legislation restricted the development of new facilities within Banff and Jasper.

The five areas chosen for the Tourism Destination Area Planning (TDAP) program, illustrated in Figure 4.1, include: Southeastern Alberta; Southwestern Alberta; Grande Cache and area; Cold Lake/Grande Centre/Bonnyville; and West Central Alberta. Although no criteria were clearly established for delineating the above area boundaries, Bloomfield and Hoole (1981) claim they reflect a mixed rationale including administrative limits (such as municipal boundaries and major highways), natural barriers (such as rivers), and perceived slow economic growth areas.
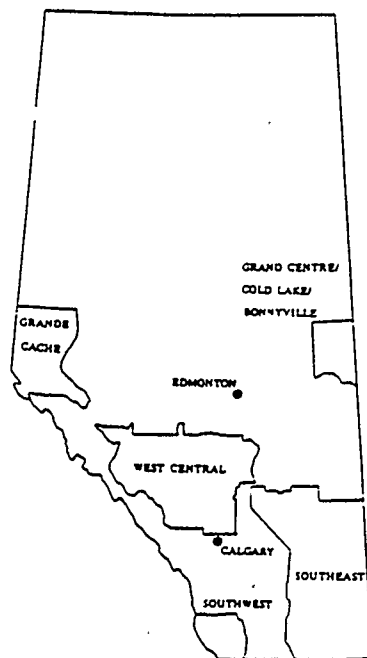
Figure 4.1   Tourism destination planning areas.
            Source: Bloomfield and Hoole (1981).

The TDAP program followed the four-step process outlined in Figure 4.2. **Phase I** consisted of an inventory and assessment of tourism resources, facilities and attractions. The inventory was then circulated to people in the area and to interested government agencies to ensure its completeness.

In **phase II**, a development strategy for facilities and attractions was prepared and again circulated to interested and affected parties for input. Full support and involvement from the communities and local interests was emphasized as ultimate implementation was seen to rest with these groups and other public agencies.
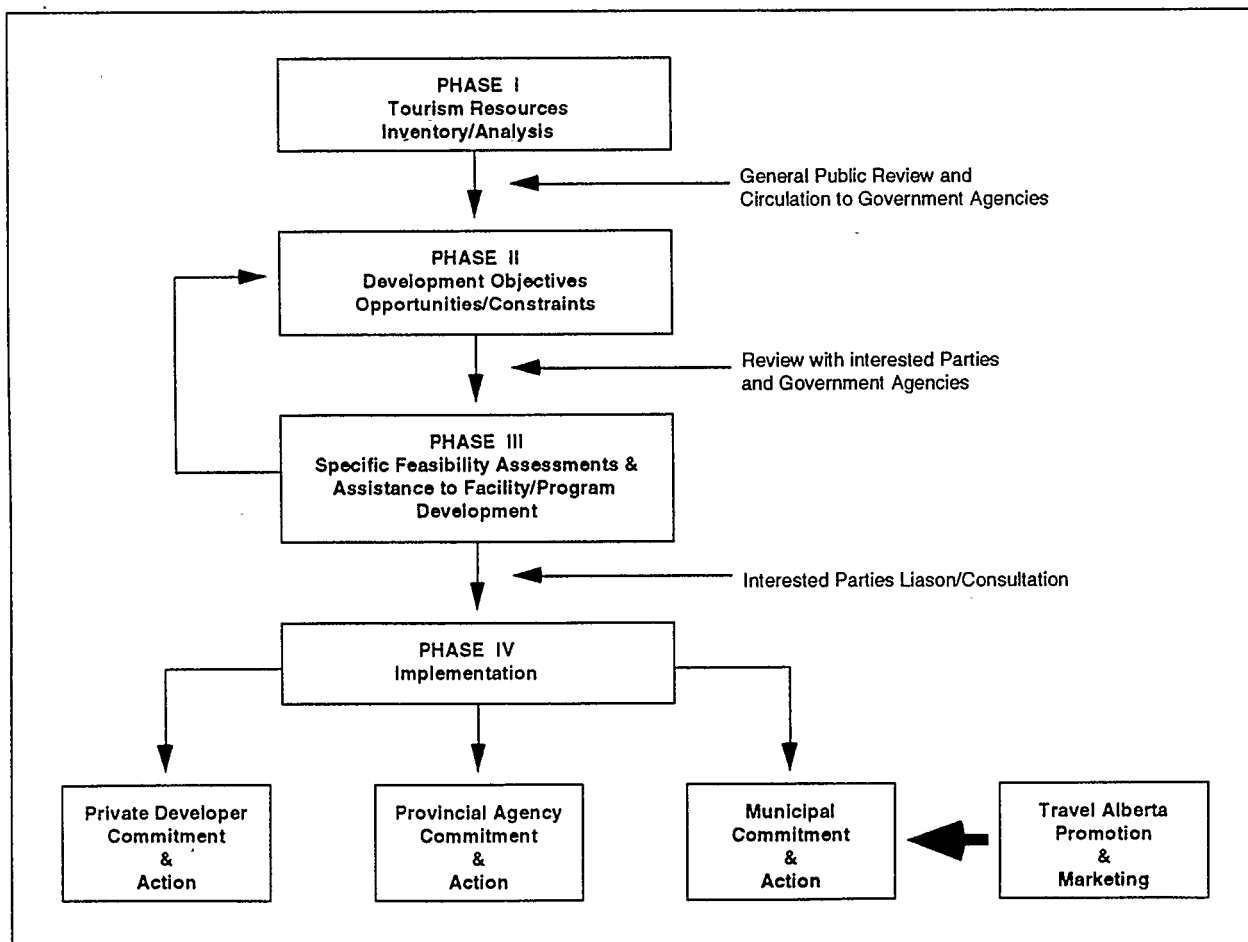
Figure 4.2 **Tourism Area Destination Planning process.**
Source: Bloomfield and Hoole (1981).

Phase III consisted of site-specific studies and feasibility studies of previously identified opportunities. This phase was flexible and its application depended on the scale and cost of the various initiatives, investor interest, and public sector involvement in the development.

Phase IV involved the implementation of the opportunities identified in the previous three phases. Implementation was expected to be undertaken by a local municipality, a private developer or a provincial agency.

The TADP process began as a selective program targeting five key areas believed to have high potential for tourism development. However, Gunn (1988) mentions that the province subsequently reduced the process *"to a less structured and detailed approach to tourism planning"* indicating that its emphasis or scope may have been decreased. Information provided by Alberta Tourism officials indicates that the TDAP process did become less focused on developing areas with inherent tourism potential. This arose when political pressure was applied by the zone associations to have the process carried out for each zone (14 in total) using the zone boundaries. In this instance, **the political power mustered by the zones stifled the only explicit regional (sub-provincial) tourism planning exercise undertaken by the public sector.**

Consequently the same planning process was initiated at the zone level, however, for virtually every zone (including Chinook Country) the process was truncated after phase I (the tourism resources inventory/analysis). The results of the resources inventory for most zones were presented in the early 1980s as Tourism Destination Area Studies: see Travel Alberta (1984) for a sample (Chinook Country). The planning process was halted because, although implementation was dependent on initiatives taken by local communities and businesses (bottom-up), the leading role was taken by the province (top-down) with limited opportunities for local input. As was indicated by an Alberta Tourism official, this met with local opposition from

communities, which ultimately resulted in the abandonment of the process.

In July of 1984, faced with falling oil prices and a declining economy, the Government of Alberta released a White Paper: Proposals for an Industrial and Science Strategy for Albertans 1985 to 1990, in hopes of stimulating greater economic diversification. The paper outlines an important role for tourism in the future economy of the province and calls for continued government investment in basic tourist services and major facilities. This role was elaborated in the Position and Policy Statement on Tourism released by the provincial government in June of 1985. The statement outlines: challenges (very briefly); the roles of the private sector and government; the Alberta Government tourism initiatives; and Alberta's tourism strengths and opportunities.

The statement describes tourism in Alberta as a partnership between the private and public sector and has outlined five common goals for the tourism partners as follows:

> *1) Establish higher standards in service skills and attitudes   throughout the tourism industry.*
>
> *2) Develop and market the province of Alberta as a major four season travel destination.*
>
> *3) Foster the development and improvement of physical facilities, attractions and events.*
>
> *4) Create a greater awareness among Albertans of the province's tourism potential and the social and economic contributions generated by the industry.*
>
> *5) Encourage meaningful employment opportunities through manpower planning and training in the tourism industry.*

Five responsibilities for the private sector are described:

> *1) To provide excellence of service in all areas and to monitor performance, particularly for courtesy and maintenance of facilities;*

2) To provide tourism facilities and services that meet the requirements and expectations of the visitor.

3) To promote individual businesses and services to their defined markets.

4) To undertake new development as demand requires.

5) To advise government on policies and programs that will assist the industry.

The seven responsibilities for the Government of Alberta are:

1. To market Alberta as a tourism destination, establishing the image and awareness of the Province in the world marketplace.

2. To assist the private sector in its efforts to increase awareness of tourism and the accompanying benefits to Albertans.

3. To assist the private sector in the development of Alberta's tourism markets through the provision of research, market intelligence, and consultation.

4. To assist the private sector to upgrade/improve facilities and services.

5. To minimize regulations affecting tourism services.

6. To assist other levels of government, such as municipalities to develop, and smooth the way for further development of, related recreational and tourist opportunities.

7. To provide adequate protection for significant natural and cultural resources.

The policy paper goes on to describe a range of current government programs and new initiatives which focus primarily on marketing (domestic and foreign), tourism and hospitality training, facility and infrastructure development, and funding programs. One initiative specifies that the government will work together with the private sector to develop new tourism opportunities identified in the Destination Area Studies done for each tourism zone. The final portion of the document seems to hint at the notion of strategic planning by identifying 24 tourism **strengths and opportunities** for Alberta (Table 4.1).

**Table 4.1   Twenty-four tourism strengths and opportunities for Alberta
Source: Government of Alberta (1985).**

1. Diverse destinations
2. Metropolitan cities and other centres
3. Ability to host major events
4. Comprehensive network of parks
5. Alberta's Canadian Rockies
6. Four seasons
7. Historical resources
8. Cultural resources
9. Tourism facilities and services
10. Friendly people
11. Standards of service
12. Tax advantage
13. Focus North
14. Gateway to the far North
15. Alberta's freedom of space
16. Family activities destination
17. Educational and special interest tours
18. Meeting and convention facilities
19. Business attractions
20. Twinning programs
21. Internationally renowned Ski facilities
22. Outdoor adventure vacations
23. Alberta's fish and wildlife resources
24. Alberta's integrated planning system for public lands

The most recent policy statement from Travel Alberta (1989) accompanied the February throne speech.   It is in the form of an 8-point strategy that is "intended to provide a step-by-step blueprint for the future development of Alberta's tourism industry over the next five years". The strategy, described in brief, calls for:

1) Solid tourism foundation at the community level.

2) Solid service structure for the industry.

3) Regional and Provincial tourism generators.

4) Major destination resorts developed by the private sector.

5) Appropriate infrastructure and transportation access.

6) Education and training needs of the industry.

7) Integrated approach to marketing.

8) Review of government policies affecting tourism.

The strategy was seen by the Minister of Tourism as being *"realized through a multi-tiered network involving the partnership of government, communities and the private sector"* (Government of Alberta, 1989). The first strategy point has the greatest relevance to this paper's focus in that it describes the province's first explicitly adopted stance on the issue of tourism planning. It is definitely a "grass-roots" approach aimed at the community level. This tourism planning initiative is administered under the Community Tourism Action Plan (CTAP) program (described later in detail) which began in April, 1987 (Alberta Tourism, 1988b).

4.4 Tourism Zone Policies and Planning

Alberta is subdivided into 14 different tourism zones (Figure 4.3). Each zone also has its own regional tourism zone association which is a non-profit organization representing the tourism industry (private sector) within each zone's geographic boundaries. The 14 zone associations are part of a province-wide umbrella organization known as the Tourism Industry Association of Alberta (TIAALTA). The Association is funded by the government at $600,000 annually (1986 figure). Although TIAALTA is not a government body, it was investigated because it was thought to have a major influence on the development of tourism in Alberta and hence tourism planning as well.

Figure 4.3   Alberta's 14 tourism zones.

The primary purpose of TIAALTA is to "provide an effective, province-wide, private sector voice to government and the public" (Nish, 1986). More specifically, its aims and objectives are also to:

> 1) *provide substantial influence on the rate and nature of development of the tourism industry in Alberta;*
>
> 2) *to improve the standards of facilities, personal service and reception provided by the tourism industry for visitors and Albertans and;*
>
> 3) *to ensure the creation and implementation of appropriate and effective advertising and promotional programs by government and industry* (TIAALTA, 1986a).

TIAALTA meets on an annual basis with the Government of Alberta Caucus Committee on Economic Affairs to present a list of industry concerns and recommendations which it calls its policy statement (Nish, 1986). In addition, TIAALTA prepares various industry submissions for special forums, committees and commissions. The association therefore appears to have input to government initiatives and policies.

Additional tourism policy is often created for individual zones through the local zone offices. In Chinook Country a "Positions Paper" is released on an annual basis. The paper articulates the important issues affecting tourism in the zone as seen by the local zone tourism businesses and communities (those that are members). In the 1987 Positions Paper some specifics are worth noting. In particular, the Chinook Country Tourist Association indicated:

1) Support for the "One Team for Tourism" approach to tourism development in the province (described below);

2) That the Alberta Government should establish a program to cost share the development of tourism infrastructure at local/regional levels, with municipalities and non-profit organizations; and

3) The Alberta Government should support further development of tourist

attractions and infrastructure within Chinook Country.

Many feel that a reorganization and/or consolidation of the zones is warranted. A TIAALTA task force (1986b) originally proposed the consolidation of the 14 zones in a report called One Team for Tourism: A Framework for the Establishment of the Alberta Tourism Council. The document also voiced the displeasure of industry with the current approach to tourism development in the province.

In the document, TIAALTA explains that the current zones no longer reflect the needs of the private sector in the province. As an alternative TIAALTA suggests a consolidation of the existing fourteen zones into six larger zones (TIAALTA, 1982):

1) Calgary: Zone 10 - Calgary Convention & Visitors Bureau

2) Edmonton: Zone 11 - Edmonton Convention Bureau

3) West-Central: Zone 9 - Jasper Park Chamber of Commerce
                 Zone 12 - Banff/Lake Louise Chamber of Commerce

4) Northern: Zone 6 - Lakeland Tourist Association
                 Zone 8 - Land of the Mighty Peace Tourist Association.
                 Zone 13 - Game Country Travel Association
                 Zone 14 - Midnight Twilight Tourist Association

5) Central: Zone 4 - David Thompson Tourist Council
                 Zone 5 - Battle River Tourist Association
                 Zone 7 - Evergreen Tourist Association

6) Southern: Zone 1 - Chinook Country Tourist Association
                 Zone 2 - Gateway Tourist Association
                 Zone 3 - Big Country Tourist Association

The industry association has also complained of a lack of access to financial resources earmarked for tourism planning and development, citing continuing budget increases for Alberta

Tourism while their·own budget has been frozen (TIAALTA, 1986b):

> *"The reality of the situation is that unless the private sector has access to financial resources via some route, the entire direction of industry development will continue to be dominated by public sector planners. Members of TIAALTA believe, now as in 1984, that the private sector needs to be more directly and seriously involved in tourism planning at very early stages of the process."*

At the same time TIAALTA has been requested to undertake additional responsibilities, such as the disbursement of funds under the CTAP program, and in some ways the organization appears to be evolving into an extension of Alberta Tourism. This might further be interpreted as an attempt by government to restrict TIAALTA's activities so that they conform rather than conflict with Alberta Tourism's approach to tourism development in the province. If TIAALTA continues to evolve in this direction, the organization may eventually be internalized by Alberta Tourism and indeed become an arm of the provincial government.

Members of TIAALTA (1986b) feel that the existence of two parallel organizations (Alberta Tourism and TIAALTA) sharing responsibilities for the development of tourism in the province has given rise to the duplication of efforts, the creation of gaps in certain services, and conflict between the two organizations. As an alternative the TIAALTA task force proposed the creation of the **Alberta Tourism Council (ATC)**, a single entity integrating the resources and efforts of both the private and public sectors.

The ATC would be guided by a chairman and a board of directors drawn from government, industry, and the public at large. The board of directors *"... would set policy and make decisions concerning the major programs and directions to be pursued by the ATC to enhance tourism in the province"* (TIAALTA, 1986b). The ATC would also integrate the activities of the six zone organizations with the visitor services currently provided by Alberta Tourism.

The proposed ATC would likely lead to greater efficiency and effectiveness in marketing and promotional efforts within the province. However, the task force devotes only cursory discussion to how tourism planning activities would be conducted under the new organization. The task force (TIAALTA, 1986) claims that, "... *it is critical that research and development programs be industry-driven.* "

Greater public-private sector cooperation has been recognized as an important factor to encourage if tourism is to be developed successfully. The concept of a single entity representing both government and industry would greatly further attempts to achieve this integration. In an organization such as ATC, it would be necessary to ensure that there is a balance of power between government and industry. Industry-dominated development may result in minimal planning and may exhibit many of the characteristics of "hard tourism" as described by Krippendorf (1982). For example, it is conceivable that in an effort to meet market demands, industry might charge ahead with **rapid development**, or **exploit sensitive areas**, or use **outside capital and labour** to meet staffing requirements. On the other hand, government-dominated development might result in **over-planning** and be less responsive to **market demands**. A balanced organization would ensure that industry needs are balanced with other interests such as the welfare of the public at large, the physical and cultural environments, and others.

There are no indications by the current government that a proposed restructuring of this nature will take place. However, criticisms of the existing tourism zone system, and proposals to restructure Alberta Tourism and TIAALTA into the Alberta Tourism Council have been adopted by the New Democratic Party Caucus (1988). Their platform for the direction of tourism development in the province directly mirrors the recommendations made by the TIAALTA task force.

4.5 Community Tourism Policies and Planning

Planning at the local or community level occurs via the Community Tourism Action Plan (CTAP) program established by Alberta Tourism in April of 1987. The voluntary program (communities are not required to engage in the program) is "community-driven", the objective being for each community to develop and implement their own custom-tailored tourism strategy.

LIST AND RANK PRESENT TOURISM MARKET PROFILES 1.	INPUT FROM BUSINESS AND RELEVANT ORGANIZATIONS 2.	COMMENCE LISTING TOURISM ASSETS 3.	COMMENCE LISTING TOURISM CONCERNS 4.
LIST AND RANK POTENTIAL TOURISM MARKET PROFILES 5.	COMPLETE LISTING AND RANK TOURISM ASSETS 6.	COMPLETE LISTING AND RANK TOURISM CONCERNS 7	STATE TOURISM GOALS 8.
DEVELOP AND RANK TOURISM OBJECTIVES 9.	STATE ACTION STEPS FOR EACH OBJECTIVE 10.	PRODUCE A DRAFT TOURISM ACTION PLAN 11.	SEEK APPROVAL IN PRINCIPLE FROM COUNCIL 12.
REVISE DRAFT PLAN AS REQUIRED 13.	SEEK INPUT FROM PUBLIC, BUSINESSES, AND ORGANIZATIONS 14.	INCORPORATE PUBLIC INPUT REVISE DRAFT 15.	ASSIGN COMMITTEE MEMBERS TO TOP 5 OBJECTIVES 16.
SEEK PLAN FORMAL ENDORSEMENT FROM COUNCIL 17	FINAL REVISIONS IF REQUIRED 18.	COMMENCE IMPLEMENTATION OF ACTION STEPS 19.	PLAN MONITORING (6 MONTHS) 20.
REPORT TO COUNCIL 21	PLAN REVIEW (ANNUAL) 22	REPORT TO COUNCIL 23	CONTINUE TO DEVELOP A GREAT LOCAL TOURISM INDUSTRY!" 24

Figure 4.4   **The Community Tourism Action Plan process steps**
Source: Alberta Tourism (1988a).

A self-help manual, entitled the Community Tourism Action Plan Manual, is provided to each participating community to help guide them through the tourism planning process (direct assistance is also available from Alberta Tourism officials). The tourism planning process is described in the CTAP manual as having 24 steps (Figure 4.4).

The result of the process is the development of a number of tourism goals followed by specific action steps that can be implemented to achieve or help achieve the goals. Figure 4.5 is an example of one goal and the action steps developed from it using the CTAP process.

GOAL: To Improve Tourism Promotion

OBJECTIVE: TO PROVIDE WELCOME SIGNS ON THE EDGE OF TOWN

CONCERN(S) ADDRESSED: No welcome signs at the edge of town.

JUSTIFICATION: The existing standard highway signs are informative but not welcoming. First impressions are important especially since a large volume of traffic currently passes through town without stopping.

RANK
NO. 15

MARKETS IMPLICATED: All Markets

TIME FRAME: Less than a year   EXPENSE: $2.000

ACTION STEPS	BY WHOM	WHEN	RESULTS
1. Investigate the cost involved in producing and installing welcome signs.			
2. Approach Town Council to request that they budget for new welcome signs.			
3. Co-ordinate the town theme with the signs.			
4. Seek a concept sketch and detailed cost estimate from sign manufacturers.			
5. Present concept and estimates to town council.			
6. Co-ordinate sign production and installation.			

Figure 4.5   A sample tourism goal and consequent action steps.
Source: Alberta Tourism (1988a).

The CTAP manual recommends that a Tourism Action Committee (of 9- 12 voting members) be formed to develop the plan. It is advised that members be drawn from a wide range of interest groups within the community such as:

> Chamber of Commerce
> Tourist zone
> Council
> Service station operators
> Economic Development Board
> Hotel/Motel operators
> Restaurant operators
> Service clubs
> Historical Society
> Municipal administration
> Youth group
> Recreation board
> Local tourist attraction operators
> Local tourist event organizers

Other resource people should serve as non-voting members, and as indicated in the planning process steps, direct public involvement is encouraged at various stages. The CTAP manual stresses that the action plan be prepared in close cooperation with the local municipal council and other private and public sector organizations including the Tourist Zone Association. It is further suggested that communities consider a regional tourism action plan (Alberta Tourism, 1988):

> *"Keep in mind throughout the entire planning process, the tourism action plan must take into consideration your community's regional context. The tourism markets your community must appeal to will be similar to those of other communities in your region. Although you are developing a tourism action plan for your own community, many of the objectives you will eventually develop may ultimately entail working and cooperating with other communities and your regional Tourist Zone Association. Initially, each community's key concern should be to complete and formally endorse their own local tourism action plan. This will ensure that each community representative assigned to the regional group will be able to provide an established, local, community-approved perspective to the development of a regional tourism action plan. Using the community tourism action plan process described in this manual, most regions should be able to develop a regional tourism action plan with a minimum of revisions."*

Once a community has gone through the CTAP process, the completed action plan is submitted to Alberta Tourism for approval and the community then becomes eligible to receive funding from Alberta Tourism to help implement the action steps they have identified in their plan. A total of $30 million has been allotted (from Alberta Lotteries) to fund Community Tourism Action Plan projects of this nature.

4.6   Summary

The first explicit tourism planning in Alberta was a "top-down" special regions approach controlled largely by planning officials in Alberta Tourism. This process was abandoned because of a political outcry from other entities with a vested interest in tourism development, namely the tourism zone associations and local communities. Some zone associations were upset because not all zones were to fall into the five regions to be planned for. Communities were upset because they did not feel adequately involved in the process. As a result a "bottom-up" approach is now being undertaken to encourage commitment to tourism planning at the community level.

The CTAP tourism planning process is somewhat difficult to categorize in terms of the two main tourism planning processes discussed in the previous literature review. The process is similar to the "comprehensive" model in that it follows the steps of setting goals and objectives, developing action steps to attain the goals, implementing the plan, and monitoring the plan. At the same time the process has certain aspects that appear to be "strategic" in nature, such the listing and ranking of present and potential market profiles, list "concerns" as opposed to "facts", and creating specific "action" oriented plans with the implementation responsibilities clearly defined.

In addition, the CTAP process would be termed interactive planning by Lang's definition due to its involvement with and dependence on the local community. Given that the process is both strategic and interactive, it seems to be close in nature to the framework offered by Lang to further planning for integrated development. Indeed, the CTAP can be praised as a tool to solicit local views with respect to tourism development and serve as an educational tool to raise community awareness with respect to tourism.

Although the CTAP manual does suggest that communities work together on a regional plan once individual community plans are completed, there could be more explicit emphasis placed on researching the regional context and the need to be open to regional initiatives. Communities would be wise to undertake **collaborative** rather than **competitive** planning efforts. Krippendorf's (1982) description of "hard" tourism includes communities planning for themselves. By more explicitly encouraging a regional perspective in the CTAP process more of a "soft" approach to tourism might be achieved.

CHAPTER 5: CHINOOK COUNTRY PROFILE

5.1 The Chinook Country Area

The geographic focus for this study is the Chinook Country Tourist Zone (TIAALTA Zone 1) encompassing the Southwestern portion of the Province of Alberta (Figure 5.1). The area has a great diversity of natural resources from the Rocky Mountains and Waterton Lakes National Park in the southwest to the ranching and irrigation lands in the north and east. Chinook Country boundaries coincide with municipal boundaries except in the northeast, where the perimeter is defined by the Bow River, and in a small corner of the northwest, where the boundary cuts across I.D. 5 (Figure 5.1).
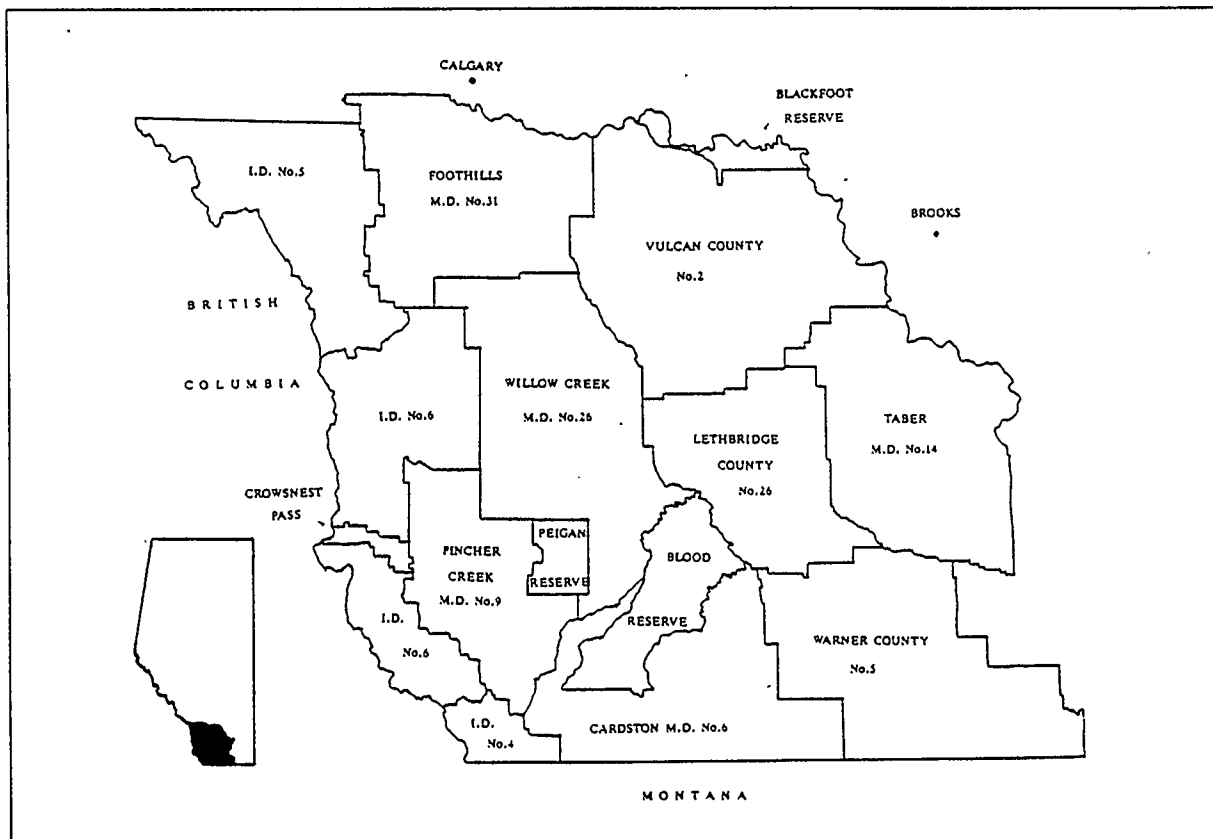
Figure 5.1   Boundaries of Chinook Country Tourist Zone.
Source: Author.

5.2 Economy

The economy is heavily dependent on agriculture and oil and gas extraction, two industries that are plagued with unpredictable price fluctuations and general decline in profits. Rural depopulation has been a concern in Chinook Country for years with a diminishing number of family farms, and related school closures, as common occurrences threatening the viability of local communities. Such communities can easily become caught in a cycle of decline with the tax base falling below the level needed to maintain essential infrastructure and services.

Tourism is a labour-intensive industry with minimum skill level requirements and, according to Gilbert (1989), can become a stable basis for income-generation. Other opportunities for economic growth and diversification in Chinook Country appear to have only limited potential. While the improvement of roads (paving, etc.) has increased economic leakages (by allowing locals to purchase goods from major centres such as Calgary and Lethbridge), such improvements have "paved the way" for development of the tourism industry by improving access to communities and attractions.

5.3 Communities

More than a third (36.1 percent) of the 171,884 Chinook Country residents live in rural areas, compared to the province as a whole where one-fifth (20.6 percent) of the population is rural. Chinook Country encompasses a total of 54 communities (Table 5.1, Appendix 6) with Lethbridge being the only city.

Chinook Country supports a range of cultures. Through discussions with local municipal representatives, it was learned that a growing number (exact population figures are not available) of Hutterite colonies are located in the area. Indian Reserves representing the Peigan,

Blood and Blackfoot Tribes are also located within Chinook. The coal mining industry of the early 1900s attracted a large number of Europeans to the Crowsnest Pass area, where many cultural associations are still active.

Table 5.1   Municipalities and Indian Reserves in Chinook Country. Source: Author.

Category	Population	Percent of Total	Number
City of Lethbridge	58,841	34.2	1
Towns	55,778	2.5	19
Municipal Districts	26,927	5.7	5
Counties	15,501	9.0	3
Villages	7,893	4.6	20
Indian Reserves	6,384	3.7	3
Improvement Districts	560	0.3	3
Total	171,884	100.0	54

Chinook Country is accessible by air and ground. Air access is accommodated by commercial airports in Lethbridge, Pincher Creek and Claresholm and to the immediate north by Calgary. Four major highways connect the area to the United States, two to British Columbia, two to southeastern Alberta and five to northern Alberta (Figure 5.2).   The most significant connections appear to be the north-south highways which reportedly carry 75 percent of the tourist traffic in the area (Smith, pers. comm.).

Chinook Country is a major point of entry to the province and has consequently always enjoyed a high visitation rate. However, the majority of visitors simply passed through the area enroute to other destinations such as Banff, Calgary, Waterton Park, Glacier Park and the United States (Exceleration Corp., 1988). The image of Chinook Country as a "pass-through" area is now changing due to recent development of major tourist attractions.
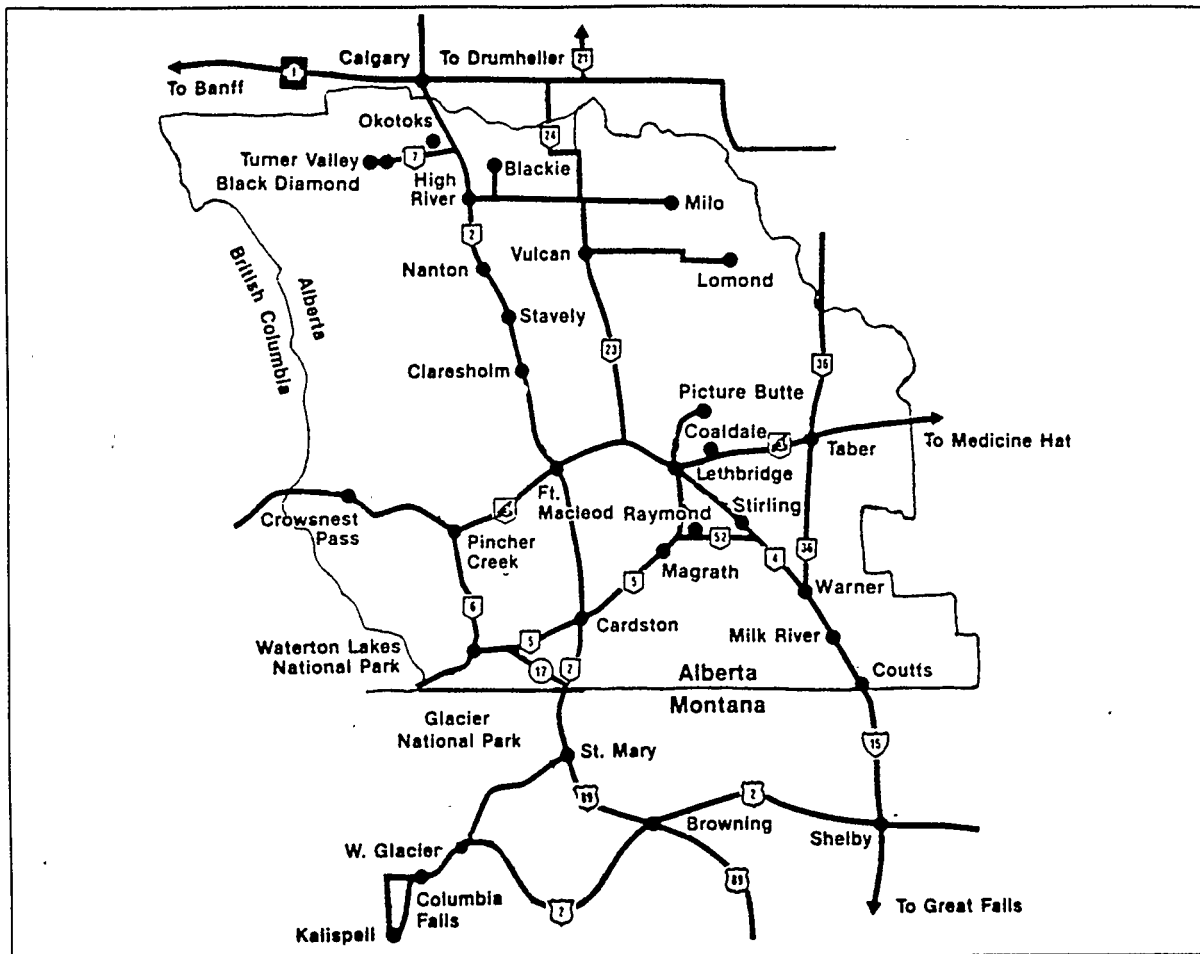
Figure 5.2   Primary highways and communities in Chinook Country.
            Source: Chinook Country Tourist Association.

5.4 Tourist Attractions

Prior to 1982 the only major tourist attraction in Chinook Country was Waterton Lakes National Park. Currently, however, Chinook Country is promoted by its zone association under the theme "a whole lot of heritage" and is fortunate enough to have had a number of major historical attractions developed by the provincial government (Table 5.2), including; the Frank Slide interpretive centre, Head-Smashed-In Buffalo Jump, and the Remington-Alberta Carriage Centre.

Table 5.2   Major Historical Attractions in Chinook Country.
Source: Author.

Attraction	Location	Significance
Fort Museum: North West Mounted Police Fort.	Fort MacLeod	Regional
Fort Whoop-Up Interpretive Centre: Whisky Trading post.	Lethbridge	Regional
Frank Slide Interpretive Centre: Landslide Disaster.	Crowsnest Pass	National
Head-Smashed-In Buffalo Jump: Preserved natural buffalo jump.	Fort MacLeod	International
Kananaskis Country & Provincial Park: Olympic games site.	Northwest	International
Leitch Collieries: Coal extraction & processing history.	Crowsnest Pass	Regional
Nikka Yuko Japanese Garden: Authentic Japanese garden.	Lethbridge	Regional
Remington-Alberta Carriage Centre: Horse-drawn vehicle museum.	Cardston	National
Waterton Lakes National Park: Wildlife/recreation area.	Southwest	International
Writing-On-Stone Provincial Park: Native carvings/paintings.	Milk River	Regional

Table 5.3 describes other areas of potential development currently under consideration.

Table 5.3   Potential Historical Attractions in Chinook Country.
Source: Chinook Country Tourist Association.

Attraction	Location	Significance
Alberta Ranch National Historic Park	High River/Longview	National
Devil's Coulee Dinosaur Egg Site	Raymond	International
Native Tourism Opportunities	Blood/Peigan	National
Western Canadian Heritage Centre	Lethbridge	International

5.5 Tourism Policies and Plans in Chinook Country

Before examining the Community Tourism Action Plans, it is important to describe other major tourism studies conducted in Chinook Country. As the initial phase of the "Tourism Area Destination Planning Process" (discussed in the previous chapter), tourism resource inventories were conducted on the Southwest and Southeast corners of the zone (Figure 5.3). Results of the two studies, commissioned by Alberta Tourism, are presented in the documents; Southwest Alberta Tourism Destination Area Study (Alberta Tourism, 1980) and, Southeast Alberta Tourism Destination Area Study (Alberta Tourism, 1979).
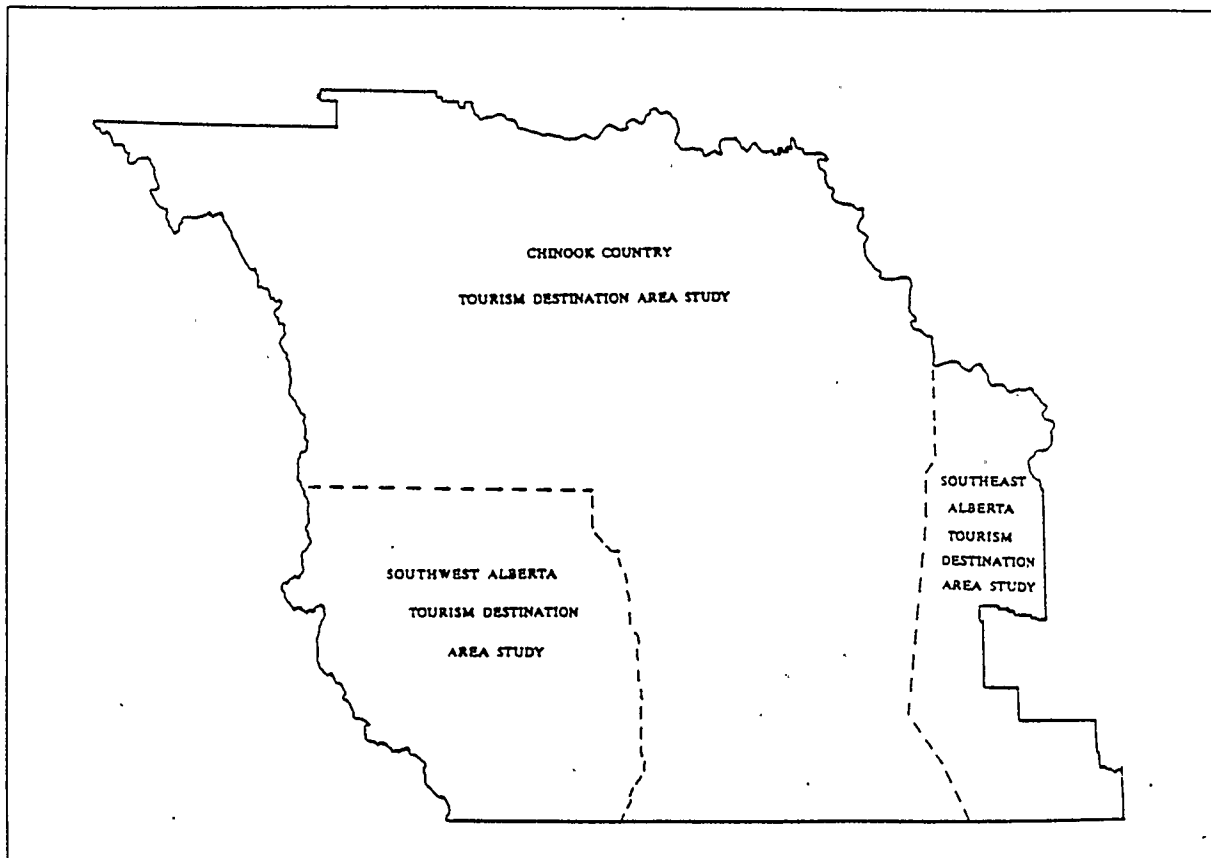
**Figure 5.3   Areas inventoried for tourism resources in Chinook.
Source: Author.**

Subsequent phases of Tourism Area Destination Planning Process were not undertaken but rather an additional tourism resource inventory was conducted for the remaining lands in Chinook Country (Figure 5.3) as part of Alberta Tourism's "Tourism Destination Area Studies" program for the 14 zones. The results of this investigation are contained in the Chinook Country Tourism Destination Area Study (Alberta Tourism, 1984). More recently Alberta Tourism has completed the Waterton Tourism Marketing Plan (1988c) for Waterton Lakes National Park.

In addition to these government-commissioned studies, the Chinook Country Tourist Association has been active in producing an annual Positions Paper expressing tourism concerns on behalf of

the 300 businesses and 16 municipalities that are members of the organization (Chinook Country Tourist Association, 1987). The specific concerns addressed by the Positions Paper include general positions, infrastructure development, promotion and marketing issues, tourism services, awareness and education, and specific municipal concerns. In September of 1988 the zone association went a step further to produce the Chinook Country Tourist Association Marketing Plan outlining a marketing strategy for the zone. The marketing plan is directed at the zone as a whole and makes no attempt to differentiate regions within the zone.

5.6 Content Analysis of Chinook Country CTAPS

The communities in Chinook Country appear to have taken a greater interest in planning for tourism development than provincial communities as a whole, as indicated by a much higher participation rate in the CTAP program (Figure 5.4).

The spatial distribution of these communities is outlined in Figure 5.5. It is interesting to note that the majority of communities that have completed their Community Tourism Action Plan are located along the major highways (#2 from Calgary to Lethbridge and #3 from the Crowsnest Pass to Taber).
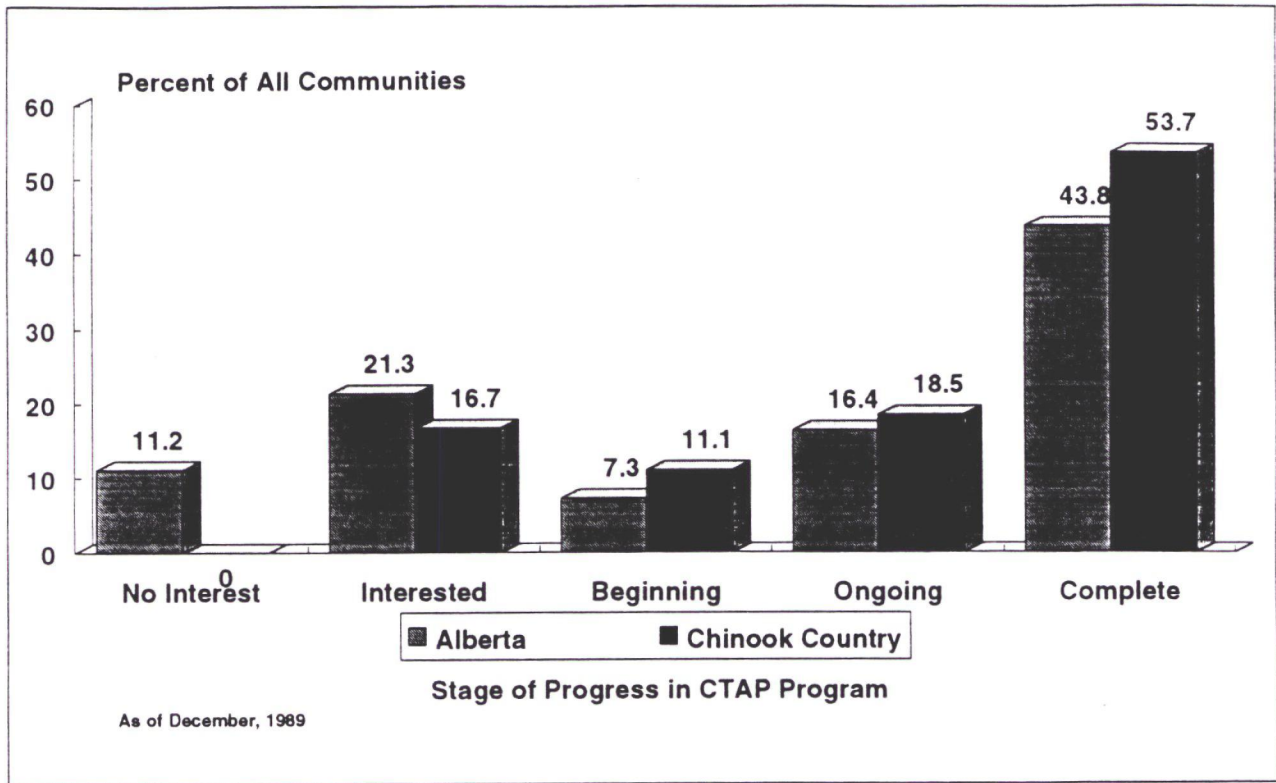
Figure 5.4 **Level of community participation in CTAP program at various stages (Chinook Country vs Alberta). Data Source: Alberta Tourism (1989c).**

The content analysis in Table 5.4 is presented in an effort to depict the current level of community interest in regional tourism initiatives in Chinook Country. At the time when the content analysis was prepared (fall of 1989) there were only fifteen registered CTAPs available for Chinook Country. By December, 1989 another fourteen plans were registered, for a total of twenty-nine. By now more plans will have undoubtedly been registered.
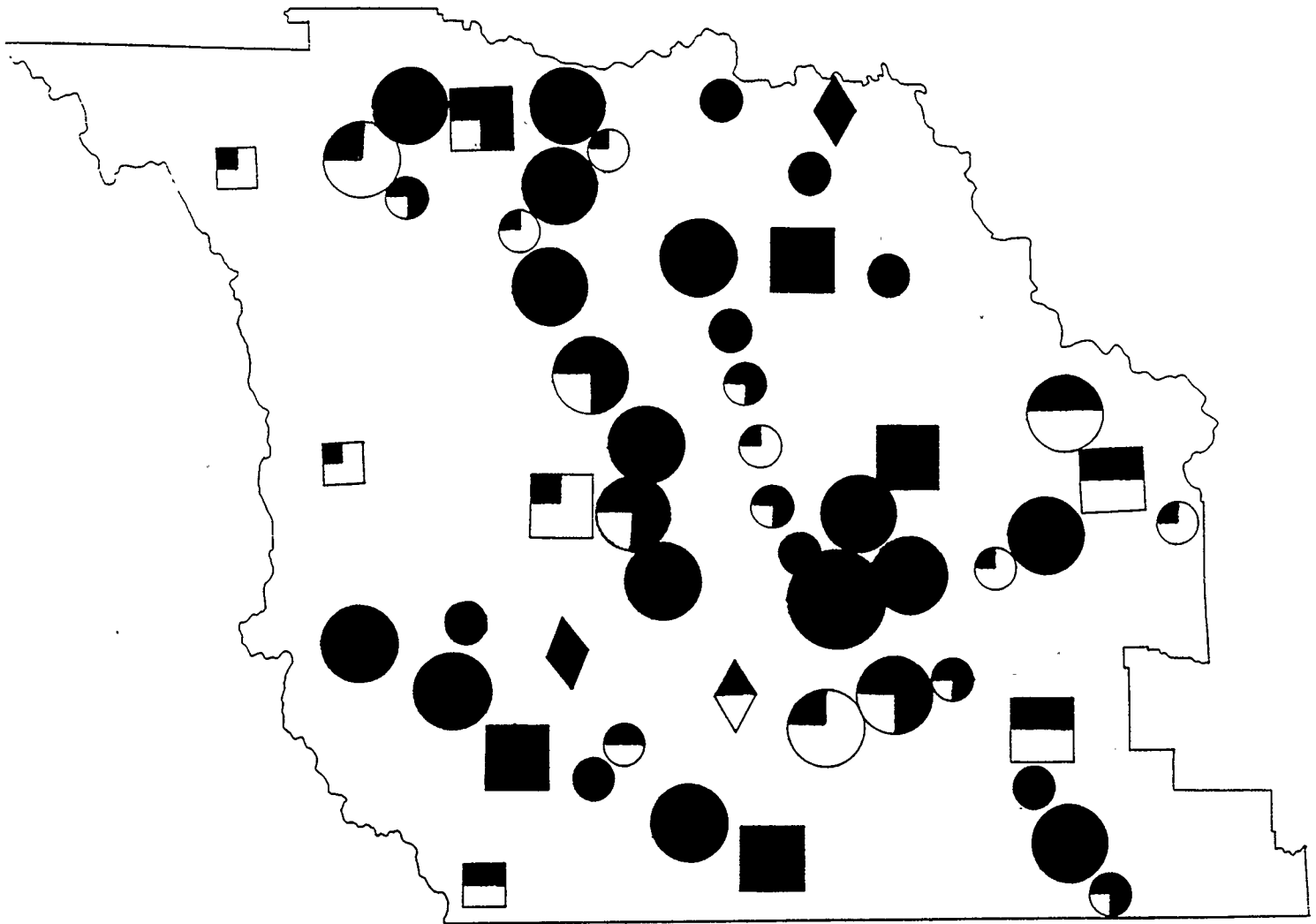
Legend

○	Village	**No Interest Stage**
◔	Town	**Interested Stage**
◫	I.D.	**Beginning Stage**
◼	M.D. or County	**Ongoing Stage**
◆	Indian Band	**Completed Stage**

Figure 5.5   Location of communities involved in the CTAP program at various stages (interested, beginning, ongoing, complete) as of December, 1989.
Data Source: Alberta Tourism (1989c).

Of the fifteen CTAPs examined, thirteen plans were found to contain at least one objective that had an explicit or implicit regional focus. Objectives were deemed **explicit** if they specifically mentioned inter-municipal cooperation. Objectives were classified as **implicit** if they did not mention inter-municipal cooperation yet had obvious implications beyond the municipality. In examining the formally registered CTAPs from Chinook Country many objectives included the phrase ". . . *(community name) and area*". Objectives including such phrases were not considered to be regional in nature unless the rest of the action step was deemed to be inherently regional in scope. The number of objectives is given following each community name except in one instance where the plan was so poorly organized that the number of objectives could not accurately be determined. The priority assigned to each objective statement is given (in brackets) to indicate the level of importance that was accorded to the objective. However, some communities failed to prioritize objectives. Consequently, the priority is recorded as unknown (#?) to reflect the uncertainty.

Table 5.4   **Explicit and implicit regional tourism objectives (and importance rank) found in Chinook Country CTAPs listed by community (and total number of objectives). Source: Author.**

M.D. OF CARDSTON - 30 objectives
Implicit
-to involve the M.D. in any activities of the "Trail of the Great Bear". (#29)

TOWN OF CARDSTON - 34 objectives
Explicit
-to improve the interrelationship of area attractions so as to improve accessible attractions on a year-round basis. (#7)
-to promote visible linkage with the neighbouring communities, so as to improve the function of the town and the neighbouring communities as "attractions". (#18)
-to integrate Cardston activities into the promotional activities of nearby attractions (eg. Head-Smashed-In, Frank Slide, Trail of the Great Bear, etc.). (#12)
-to encourage a continuing working relationship with neighbouring communities. (#20)
Implicit
-to encourage the availability of public transportation links. (#33)

COALHURST - ? objectives

Explicit

-to improve coordination and communication with Chinook Country Tourist Association. (#?)

CLARESHOLM - 30 objectives

Explicit

-to encourage local business to join the Chinook Country Tourist Zone Association. (#?)

-to encourage Economic Development Committee to publish a tourism brochure for Town and Foothills area, as soon as possible (Canada/Alberta Tourism Agreement). (#2)

Implicit

-to ensure that everything possible is done to ensure that Highway #2 is not detoured around the town. (#1)

-to encourage the M.D. of Willow Creek to pave Highway #520 to #22X and the road from the Claresholm to Willow Creek Provincial Park. (#?)

CROWSNEST PASS - 44 objectives

Explicit

-to develop the potential of creating and marketing regional package tours in conjunction with surrounding areas and communities. (#8)

-coordinate events on a regional (Chinook Country Tourist Association, Southwest Chinook Tourism Consortium) and internal basis. (#16)

Implicit

-encourage upgrading of road bed on Highway #940 and designation and extension for Highway #922 south of Highway #3 at Hillcrest. (#42)

FORT MACLEOD - 44 objectives

Explicit

-investigate development of formal regional circle bus tours. (#35)

Implicit

-approach Alberta Transportation and Utilities regarding the improvement of various local highways. (#1)

-develop an agriculture interpretation program depicting the unique farming methods in area. (#38)

HIGH RIVER - 28 objectives

Implicit

-to encourage year-round access to and from Highway #40. (#19)

CITY OF LETHBRIDGE - 27 objectives

Explicit

-develop bus and auto tours from Lethbridge using regional attractions. (#8)

-to improve relationships among communities in the Chinook Country Tourist Association in order to develop and promote tourism in a coordinated fashion. (#26)

-to develop and interpret the Indian heritage and settlement of Lethbridge and area. (#4)

Implicit

-to have highways #2, 3 and 4 twinned. (#12)

-to improve access into the Kananaskis Provincial Park from Southern Alberta and improve the information available on the park in Tourism Information Centres. (#23)

MILK RIVER - 37 objectives

Explicit

-to improve the awareness, access and interpretation of area attractions. (#5)

-to further develop co-op marketing activities among area communities. (#33)

-to develop local tour packages of the area. (#8)

NANTON - 21 objectives

Explicit

-to develop and promote circle tours in the area. (#9)

-to improve the directional/informational signage in the area. (#6)

M.D./TOWN OF PINCHER CREEK - 42 objectives
Explicit
-encourage the improvement of regional direction and information signs to attractions/services, etc. (#17)
-initiate or participate in regional tourism planning to ensure the evolution of a sustainable tourism industry. (#19)
-encourage the development of a regional events communication/coordination network. (#23)
-work in conjunction with Peigan Nation to promote, develop and interpret Native heritage as a major tourism attraction. (#25)
-encourage an improvement of communication/coordination linkages with regional attraction operators. (#28)
-encourage improvement of regional bus scheduling and linkages (ie. Pincher Creek/Waterton). (#32)
-encourage the development of an interpretive program along Highway #6 from Pincher Creek to Waterton (eg. Sergeant Wilde Murder). (#23)encourage development of regional provincial Alberta Tourism office in southwestern Alberta. (#36)
Implicit
-encourage the upgrading of Secondary Road #785 from Highway #3 to "Head-Smashed-In Buffalo Jump" Interpretive Centre and Highway #22, north to Kananaskis Country. (#4)

TABER - 11 objectives
Explicit
-investigate potential for involving area communities to establish a sub-zone within Chinook Country Tourist Association after they all have their own local tourism action plans in place (ie. formally endorsed by Council). (#?)
-establish a tourism information communications network among other communities. (#?)
-support Chinook Country Tourist Association in Highway #3 signage (ie. "Crowsnest Highway", Irvine, Alberta). (#?)

WARNER - 24 objectives
Explicit
-to encourage the development of Devil's Coulee. (#5)
-to encourage cooperative activities among local communities. (#19)

In total 10 percent of the objectives from the CTAPs were either explicitly or implicitly regional in nature. Some communities (such as Okotoks and Coaldale) made no mention (explicit or implicit) of regional initiatives while others (such as Lethbridge, Pincher Creek and Cardston)

explicitly referred to many regional objectives. Results of the content analysis show that most of the regional objectives were ranked relatively low, indicating that communities were still focusing on themselves rather than on the broader regional context.

The low rank assigned to regional objectives may have been due to sheer ignorance of regional tourism possibilities. It may also have been due to perceived difficulties of working with other communities on a regional basis. Yet another reason may stem from the CTAP manual where communities are encouraged to initially identify objectives that can be easily accomplished in a short time period. Such objectives are not likely to be regional in nature since a regional initiative would require more time for discussion and coordination with other communities. For any of these reasons, individual community objectives would likely be accorded a higher priority than regional objectives.

Discussions with the CTAP committee chairman of Vulcan County revealed that the County of Vulcan has taken a regional approach to tourism development and completed a regional CTAP for the region defined by the County of Vulcan, which includes 6 incorporated municipalities (Arrowwood, Carmangay, Champion, Lomond, Milo, and Vulcan) and the County of Vulcan. The initial reaction by Alberta Tourism officials was negative and they refused to endorse the plan asking that each community first produce and register its own plan.

The rationale behind Alberta Tourism's decision was that individual community objectives might be lost in the larger regional picture. The preference was to have individual communities clearly articulate their own objectives before sending representatives to participate in a regional planning exercise. However, the communities in Vulcan County refused to produce individual plans and threatened to simply duplicate the regional plan for each community and have the individual municipal representatives endorse it. Alberta Tourism officials later accepted the regional plan as a pilot project and the communities within the County of Vulcan are now eligible for funding of the objectives they have identified.

CHAPTER 6: PROSPECTS FOR REGIONAL INTEGRATION

6.1 Introduction

This chapter attempts to characterize the usefulness of regional tourism planning from both the "top-down" and "bottom-up" perspectives. The material presented here is the result of semi-structured interviews with Alberta Tourism officials in the Planning Division (top-down) and chairmen representing the Community Tourism Action Committees in 16 Chinook Country communities (bottom-up).

6.2 Organization of Alberta Tourism

"In February 1986, Alberta Tourism became a stand-alone government department" (Alberta Tourism, 1989d). Prior to this, provincial tourism efforts and activities were part of other departments. Alberta Tourism was recently organized into four divisions (Alberta Tourism, 1989a); Corporate Development, Industry and Business Development, Marketing, and Planning. Prior to the establishment of the Planning Division in 1989, planning activities occurred within the **Facility and Product Development Branch** of the **Development Division.** Alberta Tourism's planning initiatives are currently administered by three branches within the Planning Division (Appendix 7); Generator Planning (the most recently formed, in 1989), Destination Planning, and Community Services. The overall budget of Alberta Tourism grew significantly throughout the 1980s and only in recent years has shown signs of levelling off (Figure 6.1).

The recent re-organization is particularly significant for planning since it marked the singling out of the planning function as meriting a distinct division, a new equal (in organizational terms) with "Industry and Business Development" and "Marketing".

ANNUAL BUDGET
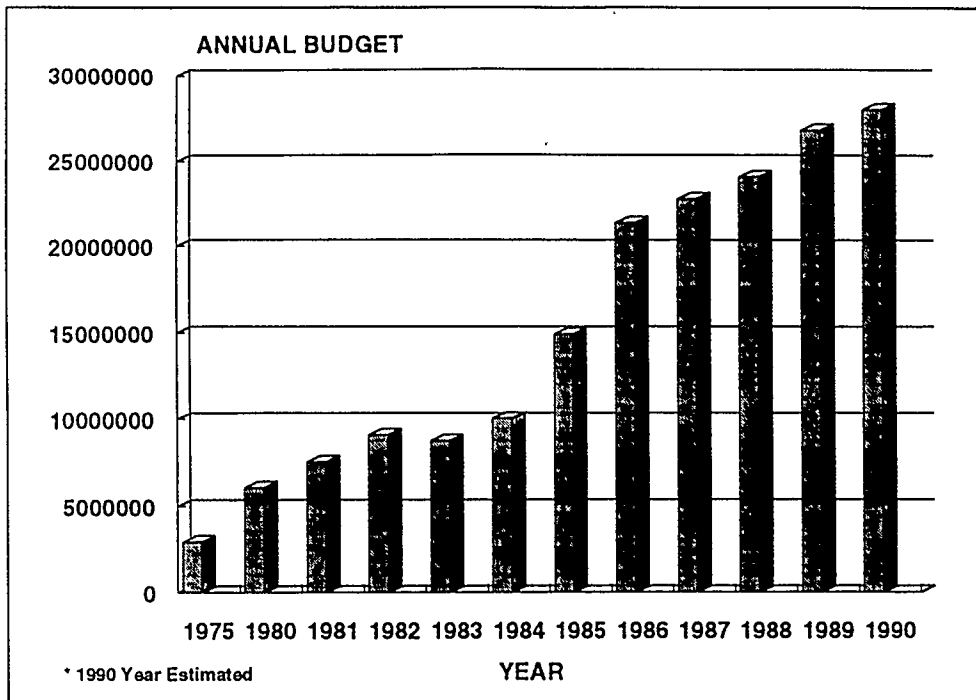
Figure 6.1 Alberta Tourism's budget growth (excluding Canada/Alberta Tourism
Agreement funding)
Source: Alberta Government Estimates.

AMOUNT (DOLLARS)
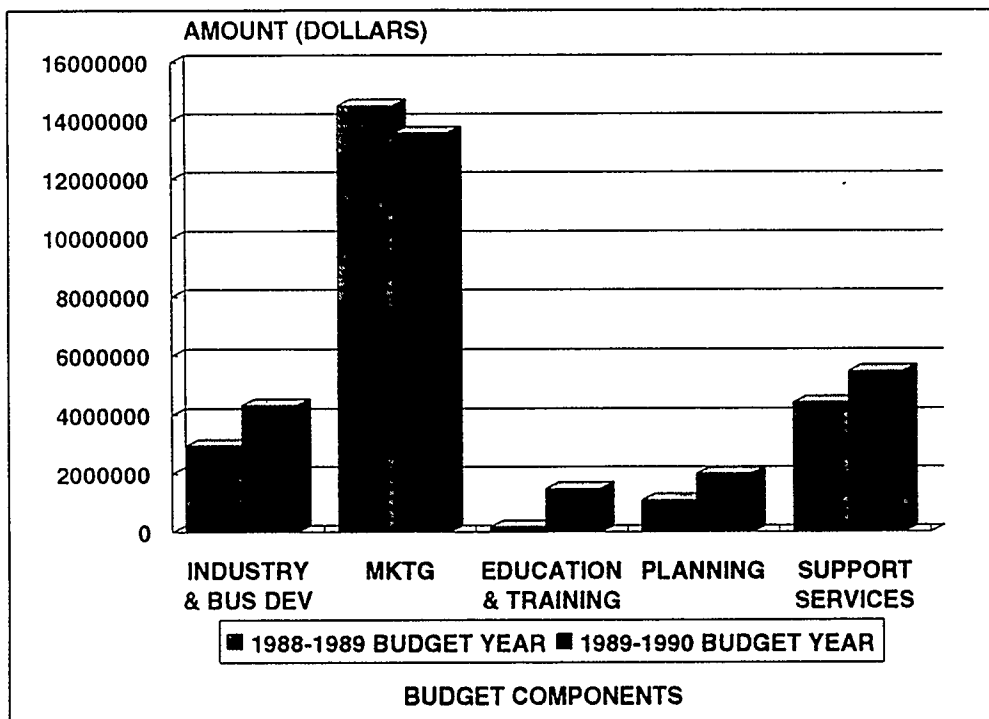
Figure 6.2 Alberta Tourism's budget breakdown (1989 and 1990).
Source: Alberta Government Estimates.

While the Planning Division budget is still dwarfed by the budgets of the Marketing Division and the Industry and Business Development Division, it has grown considerably in recent years relative to the budget overall (Figure 6.2), indicating a greater emphasis on planning.

The **Destination Planning Branch** is responsible for: the identification and evaluation of potential tourism opportunities; tourism theme and concept development; preparation of regional tourism plans (such as the TDAPs mentioned earlier); crown land planning; and planning related to tourism facility development. The **Generator Planning Branch** is responsible for: the identification of opportunities for the development of internationally competitive tourism facilities and attractions; site identification and evaluation; concept and master plan preparation; and the coordination and resolution of development issues. Finally, the **Community Services Branch** is responsible for encouraging and assisting communities, and ultimately regions, in developing their tourism industry.

6.3 Provincial Views - Alberta Tourism

Officials representing each branch of the Planning Division of Alberta Tourism were queried in person using a semi-structured questionnaire (see Appendices 1 and 2) in September of 1989. The questions were designed to explore the notion of regional tourism planning from the provincial perspective.

The survey responses revealed the following major points of general agreement:

o   there is a strong need for tourism planning to be integrated at a regional scale (ie. beyond the scope of a single community yet smaller than the established tourist zones);

o the boundaries of the existing fourteen tourist zones are not useful for the purposes of regional tourism planning because they no longer represent the organization of tourism in Alberta; and

o local community input to regional tourism planning is desirable to ensure the support of local communities.

The remaining views resulting from the interviews were varied and more complex due to the nature of the questions that solicited opinions regarding the logistics of a regional tourism planning exercise. In addition, the three branches of the planning division have quite different mandates and there does not appear to be any formal integration of their efforts.

All but one official felt that his or her branch had a regional dimension to its activities, and all perceived a need for integrated regional tourism planning given the recent community tourism planning activity arising from the CTAP program. However, officials responded very differently when asked what criteria would be appropriate for developing regional boundaries for tourism planning.

Two officials mentioned that **common theming** should be used to group communities that had complementary tourism opportunities. Similarly, **market-oriented boundaries** were offered as being the most appropriate by another official. Two other officials advocated geographic criteria based on the natural resources that would consequently lead to a "**naturally defined area**". **Infrastructure and transportation access** were also mentioned as important criteria by two individuals. Finally, one official argued **strongly against the use of administrative boundaries** while another concluded that "**regions cannot be mapped**".

Responses varied widely when officials were asked to describe the **appropriate institutional framework** for regional tourism planning. However, all officials mentioned the need to involve the local communities in the process. One official was of the opinion that the "grass roots" (local communities) were the appropriate institutional framework. Another saw the provincial government as being the most desirable framework element with input from the tourism partners (Parks and Recreation, Culture and Multiculturalism, the private sector, and not-for-profit groups including community groups). Similarly, one official thought the government should provide the framework (like the CTAP program) within which communities can work, but also within which government can provide ideas when the local perspectives become too narrow. Yet another official proposed the use of the existing TIAALTA zone offices as the appropriate institutional framework for regional tourism planning, under the assumption that they would be more "in touch" with the local communities as opposed to government offices located in Edmonton.

Skepticism was raised over the ability to create demand in areas lacking tourism assets, with the feeling that it is easier to build on existing demand in areas well-endowed with tourism assets. Strong reservations were mentioned by one official regarding regions planned from "above" (top-down), recommending that regions be "natural in terms of potential, and supported by local (community) initiative".

The preceding summary of the interviews with Alberta Tourism officials indicates that the "top-down" perspective regarding criteria for defining regional tourism planning boundaries lacks unanimity. Most prevalent are functional criteria relating to marketing, theming, or the mapping of natural resources.

6.4 Local Views - CTAP Communities in Chinook Country

6.4.1 Approach

The views of the sixteen surveyed communities (Appendix 4) were determined by conducting semi-structured in-person interviews, administered to a subset of those communities that had completed a Community Tourism Action Plan. The subset of communities as a whole had to meet two basic criteria: they had to broadly represent the geographic area covered by Chinook Country; and they had to represent all the types of community that had completed a CTAP (city, town, village, county, municipal district, indian reserve).

The individual interviewed for each community was the chairman of the Tourism Action Committee (TAC), except in situations where that person was unavailable and another member of the TAC was interviewed. The chairman of the TAC was chosen to speak for the community because the TAC is supposed to include representatives from all interest groups in a community (private sector, public sector, and special interest groups) and it was therefore, felt that this person would be most familiar with the views of the community as a whole.

Once again the objective of the interviews was to explore the notion of regional tourism planning from the local community perspective. Sixteen basic questions (Appendix 3) were asked of each interviewee and additional questions were asked to obtain other relevant information pertaining to the case at hand. Responses to the questions, discussed below, have been grouped into four categories: tourism and the community; the community and the tourism region; community cooperation in the tourism region; and the logistics of regional tourism planning.

6.4.2 Tourism and the Community

The first five questions explored the perception of tourism within the community, including positive and negative impacts and the usefulness of overt tourism planning to enhance and avoid these respectively. Representatives from all communities thought that tourism either was or could be an important part of their community's economy. Seven of the respondents felt that tourism already was an important part of their economy and the remaining nine felt that it could be important but qualified their response by explaining that it might only contribute in a minor way or that it would require additional effort to develop it in a major way.

All respondents (except one) felt that their communities were in favour of encouraging tourism development. One person felt that many people do not understand the potential for tourism development and that some of the retired people in the community did not want to see the community change. Another individual, who felt the local community was in favour of encouraging tourism development, mentioned that more commitment was required from the local businesses before significant progress could be made.

All of the interviewees concur that planning is needed to ensure that the benefits derived from the tourism industry are maximized. Individual respondents cited reasons such as: the need to effectively allocate scarce resources; the integration of efforts aimed at the development and marketing of facilities; the translation of ideas into action; and the desire to avoid the pitfalls encountered by communities that have not planned. One respondent felt that benefits would accrue with or without planning, but that planning would maximize benefits that would otherwise accrue in a piecemeal fashion.

Most respondents felt that tourism could have some detrimental effects on their community; however, most thought that these were either of minor significance or avoidable with careful planning. Concerns included: changing the character of the community and excessive commercialization; having to compete with tourists for services and recreational resources; encroachment on agricultural lands; erosion of local culture; degradation of the environment; and increased littering, vandalism and crime.

Six of the respondents felt that the main reason why their community chose to do a CTAP was to access the provincial funding available for implementation. Reasons given by the remaining ten respondents focused on either diversifying the local economy or improving the coordination of efforts by various community groups already involved in tourism.

Twelve respondents said the CTAP was initiated by the local council or economic development committee. Two individuals said an existing local tourism organization initiated the program, while two others were unsure who the initiators were. When asked if they felt the Tourism Action Committee (TAC) was broadly representative of the interest groups in the community, ten individuals responded "yes". Of the remaining six individuals, three felt the TAC did not contain enough representation from local tourism-related businesses (hotels, motels, restaurants, etc.) while another three thought that the representation in general lacked sufficient breadth.

6.4.3 The Community and the Tourism Region

Respondents were asked if they felt their community was part of a larger tourist region. All community representatives thought that their community was part of a larger tourist region; however, some had difficulty describing the region. Respondents were then probed for a description of the region's boundaries (geographically, thematically and administratively) to gain further insight into their perception of the region.

Many of the communities in Chinook Country identify with a tourism region that is beyond the scope of their own community yet smaller than the whole of Chinook. Notable exceptions include communities that are more centrally located within Chinook (Fort MacLeod, Lethbridge) where full advantage can be taken from the intersection of the primary highways traversing the zone.

Through the ensuing discussions, it soon became apparent that the Chinook Country zone has been further divided into two sub-areas, known as the **C-3** and **K-3**, for marketing purposes. The communities that fall within these areas (Figure 6.3) each financially contribute to a joint fund that is used to pay for the production of materials that promote the area as a whole. Both marketing consortia receive matching dollars from the Provincial "Team Tourism" program to effectively double their capital resources for tourism marketing and promotion.
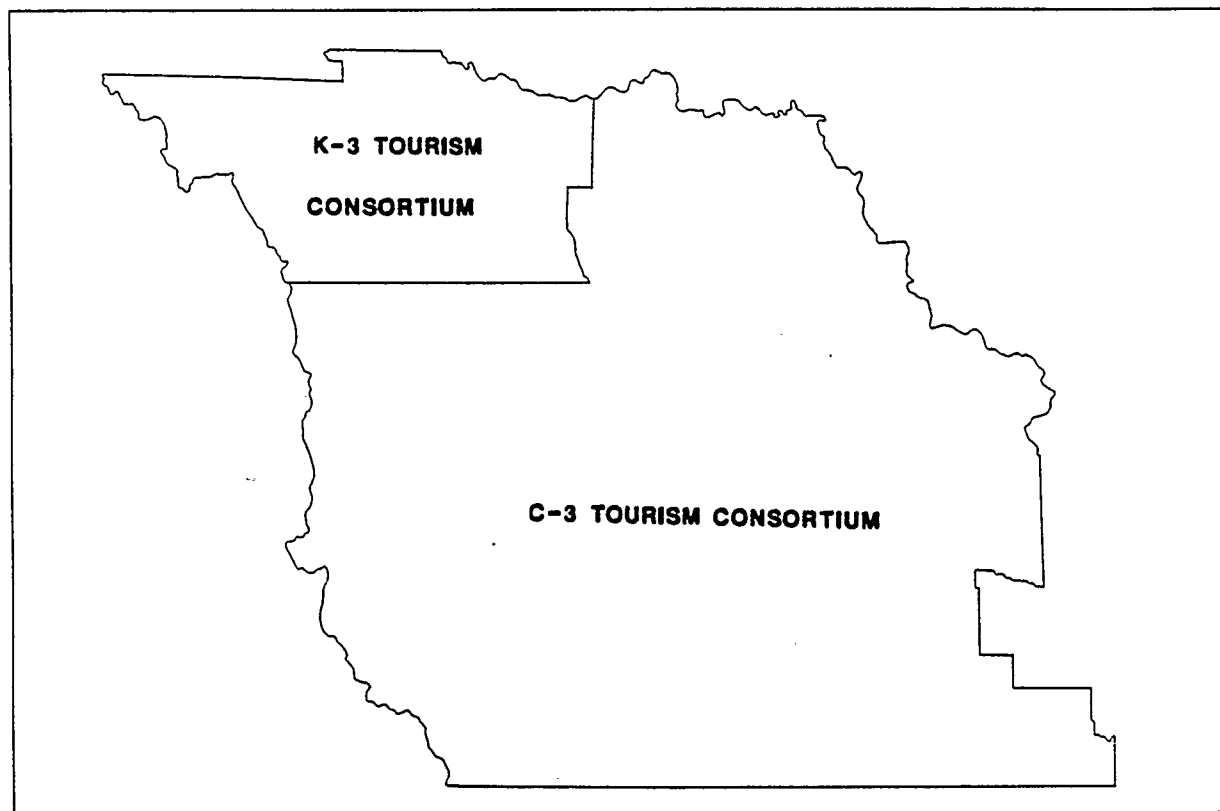
Figure 6.3   **Boundaries of the K-3 and C-3 marketing consortia.**
                 Source: Author.

The **Kananaskis-3** or K-3 area is defined by the boundaries of the M.D. of Foothills but also includes the Town of Nanton located to the immediate South. The area is defined as such by the K-3 Marketing Consortium which consists of representatives from Nanton, Longview, High River, Okotoks, Black Diamond, Turner Valley, and the M.D. of Foothills.

The K-3 Consortium was established in 1989 because the communities felt that they were sufficiently different from the rest of Chinook to warrant promotional efforts tailored to their specific products and aimed at their markets. The K-3 consortium views the area as "The Gateway To Kananaskis Country" and uses the concept as a promotional theme.

Interviews with High River, Okotoks, and the M.D. of Foothills revealed that all of these communities identify strongly with K-3 area as their region. The communities in the K-3 region are currently cooperating in a regional tourism planning exercise under the M.D. of Foothills using the CTAP guidelines. One respondent said that, prior to the establishment of the K-3 region, all of the communities within the M.D. of Foothills were very unhappy as part of Chinook Country. As another individual described it, "the area was lost in the Chinook picture which tended to focus on the main destinations of Waterton Lakes National Park, Head-Smashed-In Buffalo Jump and the Remington Carriage Collection". Communities within the K-3 region see themselves as the gateway to Kananaskis Country and much of their market is Calgarians on day trips or weekend camping outings. For this reason the communities feel that they have stronger ties to Calgary than the rest of Chinook and if they had the necessary resources they would ideally be part of the Calgary Tourist and Convention Bureau. However, at the moment this is too costly.

The C-3 area encompasses the remaining balance of Chinook Country, is much larger than the K-3 area, and has a wide diversity of tourism products that attract many different market segments. It is perhaps not surprising that the communities within the C-3 area do not identify

with their area in the same regionalistic sense as is apparent amoung the communities in the K-3 area. Many of the respondents in the C-3 area feel that the area is much too large and diverse in product type to be considered a single tourism region. The following discussion focuses on the regions (shown in Figure 6.4) described by the these communities.

The **County of Vulcan** and the communities within it have already combined their efforts and created a regional tourism action plan. Communities in the County of Vulcan feel that they do not have much in common with the foothills K-3 region, but rather feel part of a prairie region that could perhaps include the Towns of Raymond and Magrath in a north-south alignment. The County municipalities also see themselves in competition with the K-3 region because both attempt to encourage the north-south travellers to use the highway passing through their region.
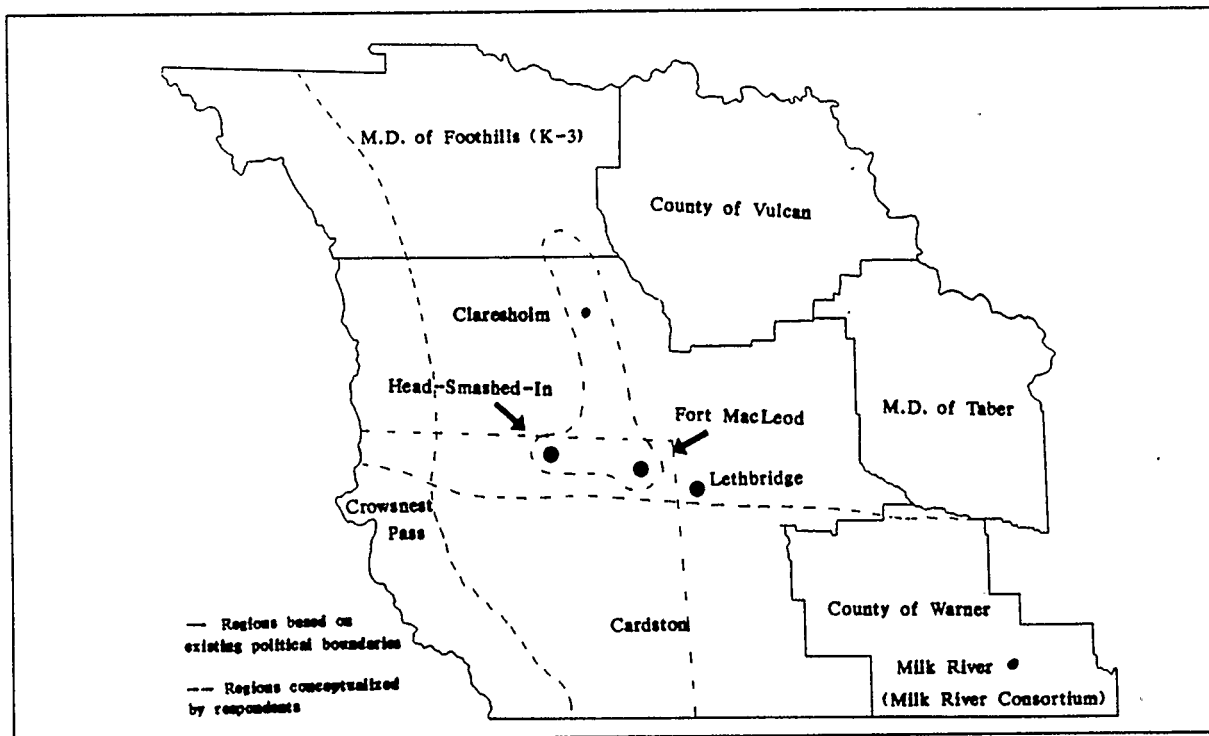
Figure 6.4   **Tourism regions within Chinook Country as described by community representatives.**
Source: Author.

The respondents interviewed felt the County of Vulcan region had no centre, focus, or major attraction. Some suggested a theme based on the agricultural history of the area and one even suggested the possibility of cooperating with the neighbouring County of Wheatland (just across the Chinook boundary). Another suggested capitalizing on the relative abundance of water resources (MacGregor Lake, Traverse Reservoir, Williams Lake and Badger Lake) to attract water-sport enthusiasts.

The **Town of Claresholm**, located midway between Calgary and Lethbridge on the major north-south highway running through Chinook, does not feel that it is a part of either city's region. The town identifies more strongly with other communities located along the Highway #2 corridor from Nanton south to Fort MacLeod but has not cooperated with them and is unsure if they would be willing to cooperate outside of the Chinook and C-3 marketing efforts. The respondent further elaborated that the corridor-shaped region would ideally widen at the southern end to include Head-Smashed-In Buffalo Jump with Claresholm at the centre.

The **Milk River Consortium** is a marketing group financed by all the towns and villages in Warner County. The Town of Milk River sees itself as part of two regions depending on the particular market segment under consideration. For the weekend tourist market, the region that is important is much smaller such as Warner County itself. However, for the one or two-week vacationers it is more important to fit into a larger region, such as the southern half of Chinook Country (everything south of Lethbridge), since this market is likely to want to travel more extensively.

The CTAP chairman in Milk River pointed out that the town and surrounding region are well positioned to capitalize on the tourism industry since they are situated at a major border crossing. As such they tend to view themselves as a staging area for the zone, with the potential to capture a great deal of pass-through traffic. Their location on a major tourist arterial

combined with the Province's plans to develop a major interpretive centre at the Devil's Coulee dinosaur egg site, have created a great deal of excitement over the potential of the local tourism industry within the County of Warner.

The Taber representative indicated that the **Town of Taber** felt it was part of a localized region based on the boundaries of the M.D. of Taber, but also believed that the region should extend south to the U.S. border and include Milk River. Although there is no centre or focus to the region, an image is created by the Town of Taber which promotes itself as "the corn capital of Canada" and hosts an annual corn-fest. The Town of Taber sees itself as primarily a pass-through community since it does not have a major attraction of its own.

As mentioned earlier the representative from the **City of Lethbridge** indicated that Lethbridge is comfortable with the Chinook Country boundaries as a tourism region and feels that the size and location of the city makes it the centre or focus of the zone. Lethbridge plays the role of a hub because it is surrounded by major attractions. The city itself lacks a major tourist attraction and functions primarily as a service centre with a wide range of facilities and a few minor attractions (such as Fort Whoop-up and the Japanese Gardens). The major regional concerns for the city are focused on establishing functional links with key tourist attractions (Frank Slide, Waterton Lakes National Park, Head-Smashed-In Buffalo Jump, Remington Carriage Collection and Writing-On-Stone Provincial Park) within the zone.

Similarly, the respondent from **Fort MacLeod** felt that the town was the centre of Chinook Country specifically because the town is located at the intersection of the two main transportation corridors traversing the zone. However, it was clear that the town. identified most strongly with the southwestern corner of Chinook. It was learned that in the early 1980s the communities in the southwest portion of the zone formed a group known as the Southwest Chinook Tourism Consortium. Included in this regional group were the communities of Fort MacLeod, Cardston,

Pincher Creek, Waterton, Crowsnest Pass, and Claresholm. The group was established because the communities felt that not all areas of Chinook Country were being adequately represented by the zone office. The group has since officially disbanded due to concerns voiced form the zone office that the group was attempting to undermine the role of the zone office. Despite this group disbanding Fort MacLeod still feels it is part of a southwestern region.

The **Crowsnest Pass** CTAP chairman felt that the community identified with a southwest region (as described by the individual in Fort MacLeod). However, he further explained that there are no perfect boundaries for regions and that the Crowsnest Pass could also belong to a mountain region extending from the U.S. border to Banff. He also felt that the municipality is part of successively larger regions (Chinook, Alberta, Canada) each having its own responsibility.

The **Cardston** CTAP chairman described the town as having the potential to be a hub for attractions like Waterton Lakes National Park, Writing-On-Stone Provincial Park, Fort MacLeod, Head-Smashed- In Buffalo Jump, and the Crowsnest Pass. Although he never clearly defined a region, he still was of the opinion that Cardston was well positioned to act as the focus of a region.

The CTAP chairman of the **Peigan Indian Band** felt that the Indian Reserve was a region in itself. From a traditional or cultural perspective he proposed the historic Blackfoot territory as a region meaningful to the Peigan Indian Band. However, this region would extend from the Saskatchewan River south to the Yellowstone River in the United States. He also mentioned the Treaty 7 Indian Country Tourism Association (initiated to help gain recognition within the Alberta Tourism Zones) as signifying a non-contiguous region connected by culture or theme (it is worth noting that the Treaty Seven tribes are also trying to obtain Community Futures status as a discontiguous group with a common native interest).

Despite past community dissatisfaction with the Chinook Country Tourist Association, recent improvements and efforts to more broadly represent all areas within Chinook, notably the establishment of the K-3 and C-3 marketing consortia, have improved the organization in the opinion of the communities. While many communities feel that they more closely identify with a region smaller than that of the zone, they also see membership in Chinook Country as a good way of pooling their resources for more effective marketing and promotion of their tourism products.

The sub-regions that surfaced from the interviews seem to be strongest in the areas where tourism is the least developed (the north and east) in Chinook Country. In these areas the sub-regions described by communities seem to be supported strongly by all the communities in the sub-regions. By contrast, the communities in south-western Chinook Country seem to be in much less agreement as to what appropriate sub-regional boundaries might look like. Most of these communities tended to see themselves as a centre of a sub-region. Perhaps this is because these communities enjoy a good location and abundance of natural and cultural tourism resources, and therefore do not feel it is necessary to work together to the same extent as elsewhere to attract tourists. Perhaps even more sub-regions would have been suggested if more communities had been interviewed in the south-western part of the zone.

6.4.4 Community Cooperation in the Tourism Region

Respondents were asked if they thought it would be useful to cooperate with other communities in the region to attract tourists, and if they thought it was likely that the other communities would be willing to do so. Fourteen of the 16 respondents unequivocally stated that they felt it would be useful to cooperate with other communities within their region. Two communities, Lethbridge and the Peigan Indian Band, were more cautious in their response although still amenable to the idea.

The Peigan Indian Band was hesitant and felt that other communities would have to recognize and respect the uniqueness of the Indian way of life. Local community members must be educated about Indian culture and values so that their involvement in joint tourism planning accurately represents native history and values. The Lethbridge representative suggested that individual communities carry out their own initiatives prior to the initiation of a regional exercise that involves more than cooperative marketing. It is interesting to note that these two communities were also the only ones that did not identify with a region that was smaller than Chinook but larger than their own community.

Those community representatives who felt it would be useful to cooperate with other communities in their region gave a variety of reasons for their responses. Many reasons focused on the ability to marshal a larger pool of resources to undertake initiatives that would have a greater impact than those that could be undertaken unilaterally. A predominant reason was the ability to improve promotional efforts and increase a community's attractiveness by including it in a regional package of tourism products. Many felt that it is essential to pool resources to produce the high quality promotional materials that are necessary to reach the national and international tourist markets. Another respondent said that it is essential to sell a "destination area", not a particular community, to appeal to the widest market. Some felt that communities could be brought closer together by working on joint initiatives.

All but one of the communities felt that the other communities within their region, as they defined it, would be willing to cooperate with them to attract tourists. Claresholm was unsure if the communities within its region would be willing to cooperate (since joint initiatives with other communities had not been explored). The communities within the County of Vulcan mentioned that, since they completed their regional tourism action plan, the Village of Carmangay had decided to prepare a separate joint CTAP with the Village of Barons (located in the adjacent County of Lethbridge) since the two share an administrator.

As evidenced from the previous section, many communities have already begun to cooperate with neighbouring communities to attract tourists. In most cases this cooperation has been for promotion and advertising purposes only. The County of Vulcan has completed a regional tourism plan and the M.D.s of Foothills and Taber are currently working towards regional plans with other communities in their jurisdictions. However, other communities that have indicated an interest in regional tourism planning do not have clear ideas of how regional boundaries would be defined or what the logistics would be.

6.4.5 Logistics of Regional Tourism Planning

The remaining questions focused on the logistics of regional tourism planning, and explored: the advantages and disadvantages; the barriers that might be encountered; the criteria for defining regions; and the organization responsible for taking the lead role.

All community representatives felt that a regional tourism planning exercise would be useful. Many similar views were expressed when respondents were asked to outline the advantages and disadvantages of a regional tourism planning exercise. The majority reiterated earlier claims that by pooling resources and engaging in greater cooperation, more substantial accomplishments could be achieved than if each community were to work alone. Many representatives felt that a regional tourism planning exercise would promote better understanding, communication and cooperation between local communities, and create an appreciation for their commonalities and differences (a learning experience). Some felt that views concerning tourism would be broadened beyond the local community. Issues of a regional concern that separate communities may feel they cannot or should not deal with can be explicitly addressed. Many respondents felt that a more viable or appealing tourism product would be created. The process could also facilitate the development of circle tours. By collaborating in a regional planning exercise communities could better avoid the duplication of effort. Working

as a group, communities could more effectively organize amenities, attractions and resources. The number of local tourists (day-trippers) travelling in the region would increase by their learning what there is to see and do in neighbouring communities. Since the tourism product is regionally-based it makes sense to plan for development on a regional basis.

Seven of the 16 community representatives could not think of any disadvantages to a regional tourism planning exercise. The concerns of the other community representatives are narrowly focused on a few issues. The most common concern was associated with convincing individual communities to set aside their own agendas and work towards the collective good of the region. Some mentioned the burden of the extra time required to create a regional plan. Others felt resentment might occur if certain communities received more development because they have more potential to develop attractions.

When asked what barriers might impede a cooperative exercise in regional tourism planning three respondents replied they could not identify any. Among the remaining 13 respondents the key barrier identified was the selfish attitude of communities wanting to see development occur within their community first. One person explained that the "what's in it for us all" attitude must prevail over the "what's in it for me" attitude. Communities would have to extend their thinking from the short-term to long-term. Obtaining the money required to finance developments could be a problem for some of the smaller communities (per capita funding could be a solution). The additional time and resources required to undertake a regional tourism planning exercise could also be a barrier.

Community representatives were then asked if they thought a generic set of criteria could be used to define regions for the purposes of tourism planning. This question was by far the most difficult for respondents to answer and many probes, related to how they conceptualized the boundaries for their own region, were used to elicit a response. Even so, two of the individuals

could not sufficiently conceptualize the question to give a definitive response. Five of the respondents felt that a generic set of criteria could not be used to define regions for the purposes of tourism planning. One individual was against the idea of placing boundaries around regions because it was felt that regions should integrate with each other (spilling over into one another) and that strong boundaries might inhibit this. The other four respondents felt that, because each community and region is in a unique situation, the criteria would have to change according to the circumstances, and what works for some communities would not necessarily work for others.

The remaining nine individuals were of the opinion that a generic set of criteria could be used to define regions for the purpose of tourism planning. One respondent said the criteria would have to be very broad and flexible in nature. Four of these respondents could not elaborate or describe criteria but stated that criteria would have to be broad and include many general points. Two respondents felt that regional boundaries should define an area that would appeal to the chosen target market segment(s) or an area that offers a consistent tourism product. Another two respondents explained that major geographic features such as highways and rivers should be used as boundaries of regions that represent different geographic types (mountains, prairie, foothills, etc.). Another suggested that municipal district or county boundaries ought to be employed to eliminate the addition of more boundaries that would only further complicate the present situation.

The final question put to respondents asked who should take the lead role in a tourism planning exercise. They were prompted with the following suggestions: the local communities; the Chinook Country Zone office (in Lethbridge); Alberta Tourism; others; or a combination of these. The responses varied significantly.

Seven respondents felt that the local communities should take the lead role in a tourism planning exercise, however, many outlined other roles for Alberta Tourism and the zone office. One person thought Alberta Tourism should oversee the whole process to ensure that efforts are appropriately integrated. Another saw a similar role of coordination being undertaken by the zone office. Yet another individual defined roles for both Alberta Tourism (as a regulatory body, and maintaining the provincial and federal focus by lobbying for funds) and the zone office (as resource people, and to provide a broader regional perspective).

Two other respondents felt that the zone should take the lead role in a tourism planning exercise because their broad community representation would help eliminate the problem of individual community agendas. One of these suggested that Alberta Tourism act as reservoir of resource people, and that the communities ensure that the assistance is supplied to the rest of the industry.

Two other respondents felt that Alberta Tourism should take the lead role in developing the parameters for a regional tourism planning exercise. One of these individuals thought the zone office should be a source for resources and information and the communities should be responsible for putting it all together and making it work. The other individual felt Alberta Tourism should provide the process and consult with the zone in drawing up the regional boundaries with input to the overall process by local communities.

Finally, five respondents suggested that a combination of Alberta Tourism, the zone office and the local communities is required to effectively lead a tourism planning exercise. One individual suggested that involvement of the province and the zone is needed to eliminate in-fighting amongst communities. In terms of roles: Chinook Country could coordinate the marketing and promotion; Alberta Tourism could contribute resource people and provide funding; and the local communities could ensure that projects are a "good fit" with the interests

and concerns of local residents. One respondent suggested that Alberta Tourism and the zone should take the lead role in consultation with the community. Another individual said that the zone office and the local communities should take the lead with professional planning assistance and funding guidelines from Alberta Tourism.

6.5 Summary

Both Alberta Tourism and communities in Chinook Country indicate that **there is a need for tourism planning**. Alberta Tourism has clearly articulated the importance of planning through the creation of a "Planning Division" in a reorganization of Alberta Tourism in 1989. While the Planning Division budget is still dwarfed by the budgets of the Marketing Division and the Industry and Business Development Division, it has grown considerably in recent years relative to the budget overall, indicating **a greater emphasis on planning**.

Alberta Tourism officials believe: **there is a strong need for tourism planning to be integrated at a regional scale; the boundaries of the existing fourteen tourist zones are not useful for the purposes of regional tourism planning; and local community input to regional tourism planning is desirable to ensure the support of local communities.** When asked what criteria would be appropriate for developing regional boundaries for tourism planning, officials mentioned **common theming , market-oriented boundaries, naturally defined areas, Infrastructure and transportation access.** One official argued **strongly against the use of administrative boundaries** while another concluded that **"regions cannot be mapped".** When asked to describe the **appropriate institutional framework** for regional tourism planning, all officials mentioned the need to involve the local communities in the process.

Many of the communities in Chinook Country identify with **a tourism region that is beyond the scope of their own community yet smaller than the whole of Chinook.** While many communities feel that they more closely identify with a region smaller than that of the zone, they also see membership in Chinook Country as a good way of pooling their resources for more effective marketing and promotion of their tourism products. With this in mind, the existence of tourism zones do not necessarily impede regional tourism planning efforts that do not coincide with zone boundaries.

The sub-regions that surfaced from the interviews seem to be strongest in the areas where tourism is the least developed (the north and east) in Chinook Country. In these areas the sub-regions described by communities seem to be supported strongly by all the communities in the sub-regions. By contrast, the communities in south-western Chinook Country seem to be in much less agreement as to what appropriate sub-regional boundaries might look like. Most of these communities tended to see themselves as a centre of a sub-region. Perhaps this is because these communities enjoy a good location and abundance of natural and cultural tourism resources, and therefore do not feel it is necessary to work together to the same extent as elsewhere to attract tourists.

In the final assessment it is clear that both the communities and Alberta Tourism officials are supportive of regional tourism planning. The interviews strongly suggest that the participation of a multiplicity of tourism partners are required for successful regional tourism planning. These partners include the local communities (and the various public and private sector interests they represent), Alberta Tourism, and the Tourism Zone Association. It is evident that there is no desire to establish a new single-purpose institution to undertake regional tourism planning. Rather, support seems to be directed towards the participation of the various tourism partners in jointly developed and owned plans with particular support and ownership by the local communities.

It is not clear to either the communities or the Provincial Tourism official what type of process is required to produce a regionally integrated regional tourism plan. Certainly, the prospects for regionally integrated tourism planning look good. However, **a process must be defined** for all of the tourism partners to provide the guidance and vision required to translate their support and enthusiasm into regional tourism planning.

CHAPTER 7: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This project has examined the opinions of community representatives in the Chinook Country Tourist Zone and Alberta Tourism officials regarding the concept of regional tourism planning. Aside from the department of Tourism, other departments such as Culture and Multiculturalism, Recreation and Parks, and Forestry, Lands and Wildlife have mandates directly impacting tourism development. Perhaps less directly related are the mandates of Transportation and Utilities, Environment, Energy, and Economic Development and Trade. Because of constraints, the opinions of these provincial government departments, regarding regional tourism planning, could not be investigated. It is therefore worth mentioning that other department mandates are of concern and that a continuing problem of coordination between government departments with tourism related mandates has been identified (Wight, 1988).

The purpose of this final chapter is to provide a critical summary of the various arguments for and against regional tourism planning that have been identified in the previous chapter and introduce important policy and planning management considerations. The following (Table 7.1) represents the opinions of Alberta Tourism officials and Chinook Country community representatives as determined from the semi-structured interviews. The subsequent discussion draws from the entirety of the research done in this project and represents design principles for consideration in relation to regional tourism planning.

Table 7.1   Arguments for and against regional tourism planning.
             Source: Author.

For Regional Planning	Against Regional Planning
helps reduce the duplication of attractions and services among neighbouring communities	requires the expenditure of additional resources (time and money)
pooling resources can create a critical mass of funds and other resources necessary to undertake more ambitious developments	new regional boundaries would be a new bureaucratic feature
bring local communities closer together and improve relationships	could require a new administrative body
broadens the views of individual communities	could compromise individual community autonomy or identity
is a learning experience involving sharing ideas and information between communities	lack of agreement regarding the appropriate criteria for defining regional boundaries
the external views of other communities may help a community realistically define local tourism assets and liabilities	the difficulty of bringing together a wide variety of interest groups together in support of a single plan or strategy
issues of a regional concern that individual communities feel they cannot or should not deal with can be explicitly addressed	
increases the number of local tourists (day- trippers) travelling in the region by them learning what there is to see and do in neighbouring communities	
better identification and assessment of environmental carrying capacity, tolerance and cumulative impacts	
communities working together regionally in an organized fashion may be more effective in getting the attention of government departments that could assist in tourism development	

7.1 Tourism Planning in Alberta

Research findings indicate that no formalized tourism planning is currently taking place at the provincial level; however, the government has released a policy document that encourages planning at the community level. At the tourism zone level, ambitious planning efforts (employing the rational-comprehensive planning process) initiated in the early 1980s were aborted prior to the implementation phase. Currently, at the tourist zone level TIAALTA voices concerns of the private sector to government and is heavily involved in marketing the fourteen tourism zones. Significant tourism planning progress is currently being made at the local or community level under the Community Tourism Action Plan program. The CTAP process an example of the **strategic-interactive planning process** advanced by Lang (1988).

7.2 Institutional Support Structures

If the industry and government continue to remain separate entities in the province, managing regional tourism planning will be a great challenge plagued with the difficulties of coordination. To be successful in this situation, tensions between the interest groups (specifically the zone, the province, and the communities) that would be involved in a regional tourism planning exercise would have to be recognized and dealt with in a more flexible manner than is currently the case.

A new regional tourism institution should not be created as this would only add to the number of organizations with a tourism mandate and increase the existing fragmentation. The successful development of tourism depends on a public-private sector partnership. The creation of the **Alberta Tourism Council (ATC)**, a single entity integrating the resources and efforts of both the private and public sectors, was proposed by a TIAALTA task force in 1986. Such an organization could be expected to significantly improve coordination of public and private sector efforts in the planning and development of tourism in Alberta.

In addition to improving the public-private sector partnership, a single organization would also provide communities wishing to encourage tourism with one-window for assistance or guidance rather than the existing two. **It is therefore recommended that a single entity, called the Alberta Tourism Council (ATC), be formed from a consolidation of Alberta Tourism and TIAALTA to assist in the planning, development and promotion of tourism in the province.** This would result in the dissolution of Alberta Tourism and TIAALTA as separate entities. The Alberta Tourism Council would receive direction from a board of directors comprised of equal representation of the public sector (current Alberta Tourism officials) and private sector (current TIAALTA officials). To facilitate community contact and regional sensitivity, **it is suggested that branch offices of the ATC be established throughout the province and that these replace the existing zone offices.** To facilitate greater participation in regional tourism planning, a program similar to that available under the CTAP program should be launched to help finance the implementation of initiatives in **regional** tourism plans.

7.3 The Need for Integrated Tourism Planning

Alberta Tourism's "bottom-up" tourism planning process (CTAP) will continue to work well in ensuring that **local concerns** are voiced and addressed, but perhaps at the expense of **regional coordination** (that addresses broader issues such as environmental impacts, coordination and spatial relationships). If the process were reversed ("top-down"), the consequences would also likely be reversed, with regional coordination being achieved at the expense of compromising local needs and desires (the infamous "catch 22" situation). It is important to recognize that both top-down and bottom-up processes will occur as a result of provincial and community interests respectively. The task is not to select one process over the other but rather to integrate these two processes so that they are complementary and mutually supportive. The model in Figure 7.1 outlines the various stages for both the bottom-up community tourism planning process and the top-down provincial tourism planning process.

In *stage 1*, individual communities complete their own community plans while the Alberta Tourism Council prepares provincial tourism policy plans. In *stage 2*, representatives from each community work on a regional plan that would potentially compromise individual community plans while the Alberta Tourism Council prepares zone (sub-provincial) plans. *Stage 3* is the point at which the community and provincial processes are integrated. Regional or zone representatives from the Alberta Tourism Council then meet with community members that prepared the regional plans to integrate them with the zone plans. The integration and compromises result in revised regional and zone plans. *Stage 4* involves the revision of individual community plans to ensure that they are complementary to the regional plan. In addition, provincial policy plans are revised in accordance with the zone plans.
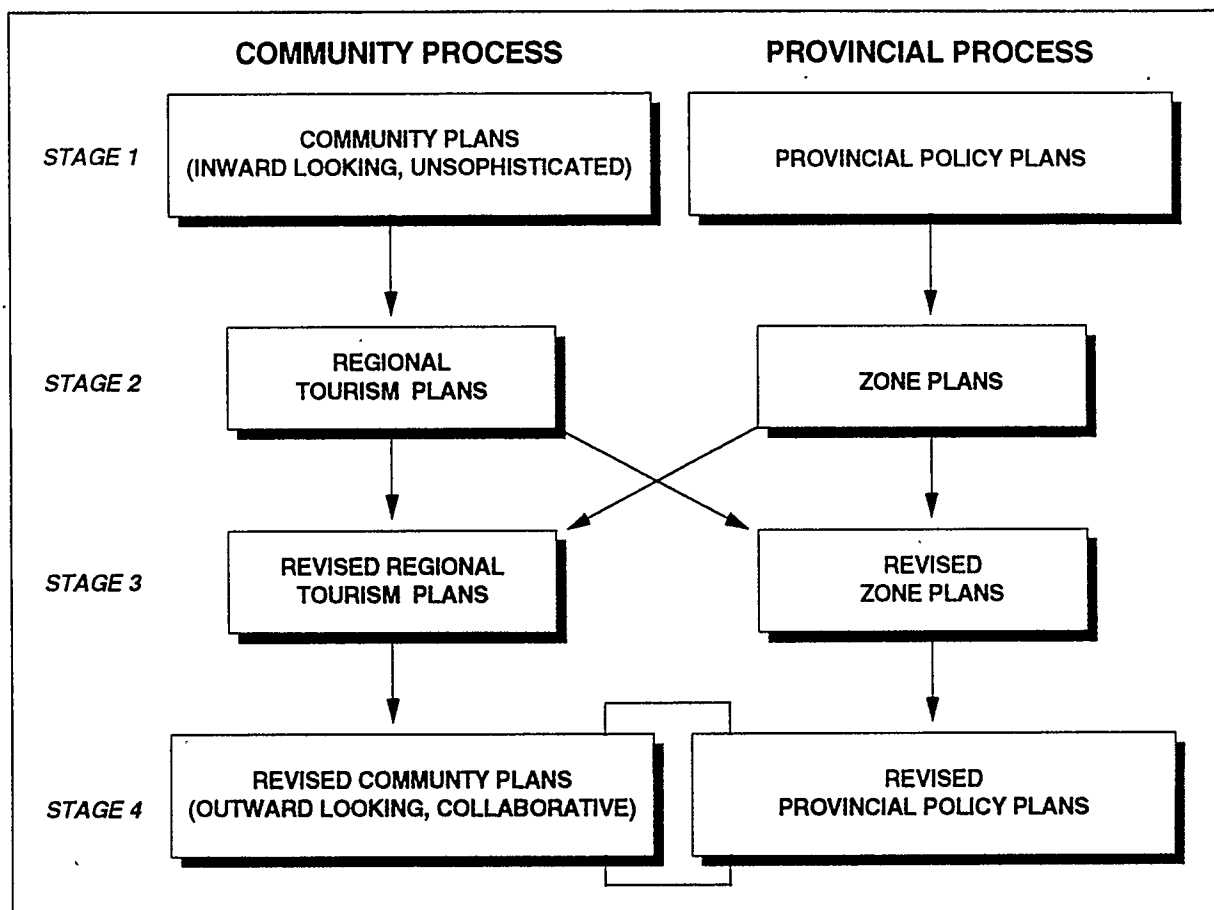
**Figure 7.1   A process to integrate community and regional tourism plans.
Source: Author.**

During the preparation of both community and regional plans, specialists from the Alberta Tourism Council could act as resource people providing technical information and advice. As outside experts that work with tourism on a much broader scale, they could also help ensure that community views are not too narrow, that strengths and weaknesses are defined relative to competitors and trends, and that the plans and expectations for tourism development are realistic. This would facilitate the integration of regional plans with zone plans in stage 3. A consensus-building and collaborative approach should be pursued by all parties in both the integration of community plans into regional plans, and in the integration of regional plans with zone plans. Note that it is important that the regions in the community process are defined from the bottom-up, and the zones in the provincial process are defined from the top-down. The regions and the zones are not synonomous, but the integration of the planning for each is critical to fully harness the synergy in the system outlined in Figure 7.1.

Using this model the communities would take ownership of both their own local community tourism plans and the regional tourism plan. The fact that local initiatives drive the process and that local communities take ownership of the plans would ensure that the plans are sensitive to the socio-cultural milieu of local communities. In addition, the regional plan and the area that it covers will be a product of "bottom-up" territorially-based inter-community ties, and the perceptions of the local region as articulated by the constituent communities, as well as "top-down" functional realities (such as infrastructure, market evaluations) detailed by Alberta Tourism Council specialists. The regional plan would ensure that the larger issues of coordination and environmental resource protection are addressed. The zone plans would be the operational or `working' plans of the Alberta Tourism Council, supported above by provincial tourism policy plans, and supported below by the input and backing of individual communities and regional groupings of communities.

7.4 Community Interest in Regional Tourism Planning

Many communities continue to show interest in creating regional tourism plans in cooperation with neighbouring communities, and some have begun to draft regional tourism plans accordingly. It is worth noting that there is no direct financial incentive for creating regional tourism plans. Therefore, any interest that is expressed may be regarded as reflective of the affinity that many communities have for an area that goes beyond the scale of their own community. Given this level of interest, it is important to examine the existing tourism institutions, and their relationship to a regional tourism planning exercise, that target the "community of communities" scale.

7.5 Tourism Planning and the Tourism Zone System

The private sector tourism zone associations are of particular interest given their influence on cooperative community marketing efforts, and TIAALTA's recent role as the evaluating agency for CTAP funding. However, it is important to realize that **regional tourism planning involves more than the cooperative marketing** efforts that are currently pursued for the entire zone through the Chinook Country Tourist Association office. Regional tourism planning ideally seeks to integrate tourism development into a regional economy in an environmentally and socio-culturally sustainable fashion.

After critically examining regional tourism planning, it becomes difficult to support the existing zone structure as the regional basis for most of the communities in Chinook Country. This is evidenced by the strong attachment of most communities to a geographic area that goes beyond their own community yet is smaller than the zone, and even crosses the zone boundaries (such as the affinity of the M.D. of Foothills area with Calgary). Indeed, the Calgary Regional Planning Commission is frustrated by the zone boundary that separates Calgary and area from the M.D. of Foothills:

> *"Although a tourism planning area centred in Calgary and extending in all directions to capture destinations and attractions in the surrounding region would appear logical, the tourism zones in place overlap with a Calgary centred region. "* (Calgary Regional Planning Commission, 1989)

The tourism zone system was initially set up to serve private sector tourism interests (ie. businesses rather than communities). It is therefore not surprising that the zone boundaries fail to be meaningful for the purposes of public sector bottom-up regional tourism planning. Despite having no planning mandate, the political influence held by the zones has, in the past, inhibited tourism planning by the province aimed at particular, or special case, regions. The private sector has also indicated that the current zone boundaries no longer reflect the appropriate geography of tourism in the province from an industry perspective. Since all of the partners in tourism seem to be in agreement, it makes sense to **restructure the existing tourist zone boundaries.**

The new zones proposed by TIAALTA (1982) are a consolidation of the existing fourteen zones into six zones. Chinook Country would fall into a zone encompassing the southern portion of the province. The larger zones would likely facilitate regional/inter-community tourism planning exercises, particularly those that would currently traverse the existing zone boundaries. The consolidated zones, by the nature of the area they cover, would be geographically more remote from communities than the existing fourteen zones. This remoteness could be balanced by regional tourism planning (within and across zone boundaries) that involved both communities and the Alberta Tourism Council regional or zone offices.

For planning purposes the zones would ideally represent yet another scale of regions based on the grouping of inter-community regions. This scale (a "community of communities of communities") might also better meet top-down provincial coordination needs. However, regional tourism planning is seen by the author as a **dynamic iterative process**, and as such it makes use of boundaries that will inevitably change in the future (because of the creation of new

attractions, infrastructure, or changes in the political environment). **As as result, a zone system based on regional tourism planning boundaries would soon be outdated.** If the zone boundaries were not updated to reflect these changes, they would lose their value from a planning perspective. On the other hand, constantly changing zones would be very difficult for the Alberta Tourism Council to administer. Given that the zones exist to meet the top-down provincial needs, they should have a greater level of stability and not be required to conform to changing aggregations of inter-community planning regions. To protect the integrity of inter-community tourism planning, the zone boundaries should not preclude cooperative planning for areas within and between zones. With this precaution, the specific zone boundaries would not constitute a barrier to inter-community or regional tourism planning.

7.6 Defining Tourism Regions

Once a regional tourism planning exercise is agreed to there is still the problem of determining the criteria for delineating regional boundaries. Some would say that boundaries ought to be market driven or according to the tourism resources available while others would advocate the use of existing political boundaries. Baud-bovy and Lawson (1977) claim that a tourism region ought to have a minimum geographic size for planning purposes and *"should:*

- *include more the one resort (or town) within its immediate surroundings;*

- *have sufficiently attractive and original tourism resources and potential for development;*

- *include most of the resources and facilities which make up the tourism image of the region;and*

- *if possible, correspond to the administrative divisions of the decision-making authorities. "*

As Dalibard (1987) points out:

> *"for people to cooperate, a structure is necessary, Its framework can be a conservation authority, a regional park, a regional municipality, a heritage corridor, an area for recreation and conservation, or an ecomuseum. Whatever the name, it is a syndicate that unites local and regional government representatives with private organizations such as farmer associations, chambers of commerce, heritage groups. Although encouraged and often supported by central governments, they started from the base. They were initiated by local people. "*

A number of tourism sub-regions, as previously discussed, have emerged from the interviews conducted as part of this project. Most of the sub-regions outlined by the respondents have boundaries that are based on those of existing Counties and Municipal Districts. Indeed, all of the aforementioned regions that have moved beyond the conceptual stage to actively work together are those based on County and Municipal District boundaries. Perhaps this is because there is already an existing institutional framework for the "region" thus removing some of the logistical problems. Perhaps it is also because the various communities within the "region" are used to working together and have established a rapport through the county or M.D. office. At the same time, other regions proposed by communities are not based on administrative boundaries. Alternative criteria have been suggested by communities and especially the Provincial tourism planning officials.

It is therefore concluded that **regional tourism planning cannot be reduced to an exercise that follows a specific set of criteria to define regional boundaries.** The criteria that are important for defining the region that a given community belongs to will depend on: the relative strengths of surrounding geographic features and natural resources; the proximity to nearby attractions; the relationships (functional and otherwise) between nearby communities; and the influence of existing organizations and administrative structures.

7.7 Regional Tourism Planning and the Environment

While the principles of sustainable development have largely been applied to management of our environment, the concept may also be viewed as applicable to our culture, society and economy. This concept complements the phenomenon of tourism which feeds on the combination of the local environment, culture, society and economy to create unique experiences. If tourism is to be a **sustainable benefit** to a community or region (and the associated tourism businesses), it must enhance at least one of these elements without causing significant negative impact to any of the other elements. If tourism fails in this regard, the stakeholders will not benefit in the long run. **It is therefore recommended that the principles of sustainable development be applied to the planning and monitoring of tourism development.**

To effectively apply sustainable development principles to tourism planning and management requires an understanding of the level of tolerable impact and a commitment to ensuring that it is not exceeded. In environmental terms this limit is referred to as **carrying capacity.** If tourism is to be developed on a major scale, relative to community size, then investment in extensive carrying capacity research may be necessary. In other cases less intensive efforts may suffice. Clearly, if the costs of tourism development and activity (from socio-cultural, environmental and economic perspectives) begin to outweigh the benefits, it is no longer a sustainable activity. Rather than attempting to react to these conditions once they arise, **carrying capacities should then be used to guide tourism planning and management for sites, communities and regions.**

One of the major benefits of planning for tourism on a regional scale is that environmental concerns are more likely to be appropriately addressed. Individual communities may choose to encourage tourism activities that have environmental impacts that go beyond the scope of their community. For example, a number of communities may be encouraging water-based activities on

different segments of a particular river. In this instance, each community may determine that the level of activities they are suggesting does not adversely affect the water resources or the aquatic life and wildlife that depend on the resources. However, the cumulative impact of the combined activities of all communities is not considered, yet may be highly significant. For this reason a regional perspective is essential or a "tragedy of the commons" may ensue.

7.8 Community Ownership With Expert Guidance

To a large extent communities (local government and businesses) are the implementors of tourism plans. It is therefore important that the Alberta Tourism Council (and the zone offices) facilitate community development and ownership of local and regional tourism plans. As Korten (1984) says:

> *"There is an important distinction between government acting to meet a need for people and government acting to create an enabling setting within which people can be more effective in meeting those needs for themselves".*

This concept should be adopted as a key organizational principle for the ATC involvement in furthering tourism development in Alberta.

The concept of local people guiding the development of tourism in their community, and reaping the benefits of the industry, is consistent with a sustainable approach to tourism development in socio-cultural and economic terms. To insure that this occurs, **it is recommended that communities be at the core of both the community and regional tourism planning processes**, and that the notion of a **community of communities** be the minimal bases of regional tourism planning.

At the same time it is recognized that most small communities (such as those in Chinook Country) lack the resources and expertise to collect and summarize large amounts of data and conduct macro-level research to help facilitate better planning. Tourism information gathering and research are conducted primarily by the Alberta Tourism Council (including the zone offices). To improve the information base on which tourism plans are made, **it is recommended that communities use the Alberta Tourism Council as a source of information, research, and advice for community and regional plans.** To strengthen credibility and community contact **the ATC council should have regional representation** and hold its meetings in different regional locations throughout Alberta in conjunction with workshops or seminar events bringing together community and business interests involved in tourism planning and development.

7.9 Concluding Remarks

Tourism in Alberta may be viewed as a regionally-based industry to the extent that most communities are not unique in their ability to provide tourist attractions in their surrounding region, especially in the small town context. In addition, the tourism assets of most communities are not sufficient on their own to draw tourists from outside their region. However, the ultimate success of the industry in a given region is dependent on the level of involvement and commitment from the communities in the region. **Planners and policy makers must therefore be sensitive to the need for both regional and community concerns.**

Consequently, **those advising communities in the preparation of local tourism action plans must remind communities that they are not islands but part of a much broader region and encourage planning to reflect this.** Communities within such a region can expect to have many similarities (culturally, socially, historically, geographically and economically), but also some considerable differences. Bearing this in mind, communities should follow a planning

process that reflects the need to draw out and define individual community tourism perspectives, and also integrate these regionally with provincial tourism policy and zone plans prepared by the Alberta Tourism Council. **The community planning process should begin with individual communities drafting their own community plan; followed by an inter-community effort at creating a regional tourism plan to capitalize on the overarching similarities that define the uniqueness of the region. At the same time the provincial planning process should begin with the Alberta Tourism Council crafting provincial tourism policy plans and subsequent zone plans. The regional and zone plans should then be integrated through a highly participative and collaborative process involving the respective authors. Finally, both community plans and provincial policy plans should be revised by the authors accordingly, and implemented by the entities they represent (see Figure 7.1).**

A close integration of tourism and regional development may not only be the answer to the successful development of the industry but also the future viability of Southern Alberta's economy. **Integration of this nature will require the flexibility of both the provincial government in support and funding programs, and the tourism zones in supporting regions within and between zone boundaries.** While there is a great need for tourism planning to be more **strategic,** the process is political and must be recognized as such by actions that also foster widespread **interaction** between all stakeholders.

It is the author's conclusion that **overt and community-sensitive tourism planning is essential to manage the diffuse and complex activity of tourism as a sustainable resource industry.** In Chinook Country, an area which consists largely of rural lands and smaller communities, a regional approach to tourism planning is required to integrate the efforts of individual communities. **The sub-regions within Chinook Country, discovered through this research, indicate that the area as a whole is far too diverse in attractions, natural resources, and product type to be considered a single region or zone.**

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1. Alberta Tourism Key Informant Questionnaire

1. What is your branch's/division's mandate ?

2. How do you relate to other planning branches/divisions in Alberta tourism ?

3. Are there any regional dimensions used for your department's purpose ?

4. Do you see a need for integrated regional tourism planning, given all the community tourism planning activity ?

5. Do you feel the current 14 tourism zone boundaries are useful for the purposes of regional tourism planning ?

6. What criteria could you suggest for developing appropriate regional boundaries for tourism planning ?

7. What do you feel is the appropriate institutional framework for regional tourism planning ?

8. Do you feel that local/community input to regional plans is desirable ? Possible ?

9. Do you have any other concerns regarding regional tourism planning in Alberta ?

Appendix 2. Persons interviewed.

Name	Affiliation	Date(s)
Jeffares, Colin	Alberta Tourism, Destination Planning Branch, Regional Planning Unit	19-09-89
McGillivary, Louise	Alberta Tourism, Destination Planning Branch (Director)	08-06-89 & 20-09-89
Milne, David	Alberta Tourism, Community Services (Community Planner)	19-09-89
Rasmussen, Mark	Alberta Culture, Historic Resources	21-09-89
Siddle, Rick	Alberta Tourism, Generator Planning Branch (Director)	19-09-89
Smith, Randy	Chinook Country Tourist Zone Association (Manager)	06-06-89
Syrnk, Don	Alberta Tourism, Community Services Branch (Director)	07-06-89 & 19-09-89
Taylor, Neil	Alberta Tourism, Strategic Planning (Executive Director)	21-09-89
Warren, Bill	Alberta Tourism, Planning Division (Executive Director)	21-09-89
Wight, Pamela	Alberta Tourism, Generator Planning Branch	20-09-89

Appendix 3. Chinook Community Questionnaire

1. Do you think tourism is or could be an important part of your community's economy?

2. Is your community in favour of encouraging development of the local tourism industry?

3. Do you think planning is necessary to ensure that the benefits of tourism development are maximized?

4. Do you think that tourism could possibly have some detrimental effects on your community? If so do you consider these important to avoid?

5. Do you think planning is necessary to ensure that these effects are minimized or eliminated?

6. Why did your community choose to prepare a CTAP?

7. Which members of the community initiated the CTAP (local business, municipal representatives, local interest groups, etc.)?

8. Do you feel that the TAC was broadly representative of the interest groups in your community?
   If not, what groups were under-/over-represented?

9. Do you feel that your community is part of a larger tourist region?
   If no, Why?
   If yes, How would describe the region you are part of?
           How would you define the regions boundaries:
              Geographically?
              Administratively?
              Otherwise?
           Does the region have a centre or focus?
           Do the Chinook Country boundaries define a meaningful tourism region?

10. Do you think that it would be useful to cooperate with any or all of the communities in your region to attract tourists?
    Why, or why not?

11. Do you feel that other communities would also be willing to cooperate in such a way ?
    If yes, What leads you to believe this?
    If no, Why?

12. Do you think that a regional tourism planning exercise would be useful?
    What would be the advantages?
    What would be the disadvantages?

13. What barriers (if any) can you think of that might impede a cooperative exercise in regional tourism planning?

14. Do you think that a generic set of criteria could be used to define regions for the purpose of tourism planning?
    If yes, what might those criteria be?
    If no, why?

15. Who should take the lead role in a regional tourism planning exercise:
    The local communities?
    The TIAALTA zone office?
    Alberta Tourism?
    Others?
    A combination of these?

16. Do you have any other concerns or opinions regarding regional tourism planning?

Appendix 4. Communities involved in semi-structured questionnaire.

Arrowwood (village)	Milk River (town)
Cardston (town)	Milo (village)
Claresholm (town)	Okotoks (town)
Crowsnest Pass (town)	Peigan (Indian Reserve)
Foothills (M.D.)	Taber (town)
Fort MacLeod (town)	Vulcan (town)
High River (town)	Vulcan (county)
Lethbridge (city)	Warner (village)

Appendix 5. Municipalities and Indian Reserves within Chinook Country.

Arrowwood (village)	I.D. 6
Barnwell (village)	Lethbridge (city)
Barons (village)	Lethbridge County
Black Diamond (town)	Lomond (village)
Blackfoot (Indian Reserve)	Longview (village)
Blackie (village)	Magrath (town)
Blood (Indian Reserve)	Milk River (town)
Cardston (town)	Milo (village)
Cardston (M.D.)	Nanton (town)
Carmangay (village)	Nobleford (village)
Cayley (village)	Okotoks (town)
Champion (village)	Picture Butte (town)
Claresholm (town)	Pincher Creek (town)
Coaldale (town)	Pincher Creek (M.D.)
Coalhurst (village)	Peigan (Indian Reserve)
Coutts (village)	Raymond (town)
Cowley (village)	Stavely (town)
Crowsnest Pass (town)	Stirling (village)
Foothills (M.D.)	Taber (town)
Fort MacLeod (town)	Taber (M.D.)
Glenwood (village)	Turner Valley (town)
Granum (town)	Vauxhall (town)
Grassy Lake (village)	Vulcan (town)
High River (town)	Vulcan County
Hillspring (village)	Warner (village)
I.D. 4	Warner County
I.D. 5	Willow Creek (M.D.)

Appendix 6. Organizational chart of Alberta Tourism.

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                              ┌─────────────────┐
                              │ Deputy Minister │
                              └─────────────────┘      ┌──────────────────────────┐
                                                       │ Deputy Minister's Office │
                                                       │    Special Assistant     │
                                                       └──────────────────────────┘
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Corporate Development Division Executive Director	Planning Division Executive Director	Industry & Business Development Division Executive Director	Marketing Division Executive Director
Strategic Planning Director	Community Services Director	Business Development Director	Marketing Planning Director
Human Resources Director	Generator Planning Director	Business Economics & Finance (Canada/Alberta Tourism Agreement) Director	Advertising Director
Corporate Communications Director	Destination Planning Director	Industry Services Director	Public Relations Director
Finance & Administration Director			Sales and Promotion Director
			Meetings/Intn'l. Liaison Director
			Vacation Counselling Director
			Opportunity Planning Director