

Decline and No Growth: Canada's Forgotten Urban Interior*

Heather M. Hall
School of Planning
University of Waterloo
200 University Ave West
Waterloo, Ontario, N2L 3G1, Canada

Peter V. Hall
Urban Studies Program
Simon Fraser University
515 West Hastings Str
Vancouver, BC, V6B 5K3, Canada

Throughout the last decade of the 20th Century and into the first decade of the 21st Century, growth in urban Canada has become increasingly focused on five mega-urban regions: the Greater Toronto Area, Greater Montreal, Ottawa-Gatineau, Vancouver-Victoria and the Lower Mainland B.C., and the Central Alberta corridor (Calgary to Edmonton). These five regions secured more than 68% of all population growth in the 1990s, and by 2001, over 57% of Canadians lived in the 15 largest CMAs (Bourne and Simmons 2003). Most urban centers in the rest of the country witnessed close to zero growth or population decline, and there is every reason to believe that this trend will continue. While the Canadian urban geography and planning literature does recognise this system-wide pattern of uneven growth, declining urban areas have yet to be treated as a category worthy of focused research and discussion. This lacuna in the literature informs, and is

* We would like to thank Trudi Bunting and Pierre Filion for their insightful comments and suggestions. Full responsibility for errors and omissions rests with the authors.

informed by, a wider urban development project that proceeds in Canada, as in the rest of the world, on the assumption that continued growth is normal and achievable.

This paper reports on an examination of the urban geography, planning, and policy-related literature in eight Canadian academic journals. Specifically, we sought to determine whether the increasingly uneven pattern of growth in the Canadian urban system has received significant attention in the academic and policy literature. We examined journal articles published between 1994 and 2005, classifying each according to their implicit or explicit stance towards urban growth and decline. Our approach and findings are reported in four sections. We start with a brief overview of the increasing unevenness in the Canadian urban system. We then discuss the journals selected for this research and our methodology for classifying the articles obtained. The third section presents the results of our classification and identifies the key patterns and trends in the literature. In the fourth and final section we conclude with a description of the small number of articles that do discuss urban decline and no-growth either implicitly or explicitly. These articles recognize that many Canadian urban places will not grow in the future and form a starting point for policy-making and planning that distances itself from the mentality that “growth is the elixir that cures all ills, from potholes to poverty, and that any city that is not growing rapidly is being ‘left behind’ and is ‘off the map’” (Leo and Anderson 2005).¹

The Canadian Urban System

Of the 140 urban areas² in Canada, 45% witnessed decline during the 1996-2001 census period (see Table 1).³ Small urban areas were the hardest hit; 54.8% declined, with the largest decline occurring in Prince Rupert (-12.1%). As a whole, this was the only urban class to experience overall decline with a -0.3% aggregate change in population during the last census period. However, decline was not limited to small urban areas. One-third of middle size urban areas declined with the largest decline occurring in Cape Breton (-7.2%). Large urban areas were the only urban class to contain no declining urban areas. The intensified unevenness within the Canadian urban system, since at least 1990, reflects several powerful economic and demographic trends that are likely to persist.

-
1. Although Christopher Leo and colleagues (see Leo and Anderson 2005; Leo and Brown 2000) have been critical of the growth assumption in some recent papers, their work has not been included in this study because they have not published in the Journals we examined.
 2. Urban places are defined as Census Agglomerations (CAs), those areas with an urban core population greater than 10,000, and Census Metropolitan Areas (CMAs), those areas with an urban core population greater than 100,000 (Statistics Canada 2002a).
 3. These are the population growth statistics on urban change that were available to those writing most of the papers surveyed in this study. Population growth in Canada was higher in the 2001-2006 census period, but the relative pattern of growth and decline across the urban system persisted; all of the large urban areas grew, as did all but 3 of the middle size areas, but 35% of small urban areas experienced decline.

TABLE 1 Growth and Decline in Urban Canada, 1996-2001

	Large Urban Areas (>500,000)	Middle Size Urban Areas (50,000-500,000)	Small Urban Areas (10,000-50,000)	All urban areas
Number of Urban Areas	9	47	84	140
Total Population, 1996	14,068,156	6,460,426	2,126,110	22,654,692
Total Population, 2001	15,065,548	6,653,110	2,120,428	23,839,086
Share of Population of Urban Areas, 2001	63.2	27.9	8.9	100
Overall % change of class	7.1	3.0	-0.3	5.2
Average % change within class	6.7	2.4	-0.5	0.9
Standard deviation of % change	4.7	5.7	5.7	6.0
Number of Declining Urban Areas	0	17	46	63
% Declining	0	36.2	54.8	45.0
Lowest % Change	Winnipeg (0.6)	Cape Breton (-7.2)	Prince Rupert (-12.1)	Prince Rupert (-12.1)
Highest % Change	Calgary (15.8)	Barrie (25.1)	Grand Prairie (18.0)	Barrie (25.1)

Source: Authors analysis of population census (Statistics Canada 2001).

Globalization, de-industrialization and industrial restructuring have devastated some urban areas while others have been able to take advantage of this transformation (Norcliffe 1994; Barnes et al 2000). The structural shift towards a 'knowledge economy' favours producer services, finance, insurance and real estate, and the high-tech industry (Bourne 1995, 2000). These economic shifts tend to favour large metropolitan regions, in particular Toronto, Montreal and Vancouver, due to their absolute density, diversified economies and their connections to other upper tier global cities.

Not all places within the Canadian urban system have been so fortunate; many urban areas located in resource and/or manufacturing-based regions have experienced significant job losses, as have those outside the influence of large metropolitan areas (Bourne and Simmons 2003; Barnes et al 2000). Changing trade regulations have recast trade flows from their East-West (inter-provincial) pattern into a more North-South (international) pattern. This has disrupted the ways in which Canadian cities used to depend on each other for economic vitality (Bourne 2003).

Metropolitan concentration of domestic and international migrants has also

altered the Canadian urban system. The settlement frontier which had pushed North and West for centuries is retreating towards the South (Bourne and Simmons 2003). Immigrants are especially geographically selective; in 2001, Toronto, Vancouver, and Montreal contained 62.3% of Canada's immigrant population (Statistics Canada 2005b and 2005c; see also McDonald 2004). The uneven pattern of settlement is greatly reinforced by reduced fertility and birth rates (Bourne and Rose 2001; Bourne and Simmons 2003).⁴

In summary, as a result of economic restructuring, changing trade patterns, the concentration of immigrants in large metropolitan areas, and lower birth rates, the Canadian urban system is experiencing sharper contrasts between growing and declining urban areas (Bourne and Olvet 1995; Bourne and Rose 2001; Bourne and Simmons 2003). However, despite widespread general appreciation of this reality, the analysis of the literature that follows reveals that declining and no-growth urban areas do not receive sufficient attention.

Method

In order to determine whether declining urban areas are addressed in the English-language urban geography, planning and policy-related literature in Canada, we examined the following journals:

- The Canadian Geographer
- The Canadian Journal of Urban Research
- Plan Canada
- Great Lakes Geographer
- Canadian Public Policy
- Journal of Canadian Studies
- Economic and Technology Development Journal of Canada, and
- Canadian Journal of Regional Science.⁵

We collected all journal articles beginning in 1994 and ending with the most current issue.⁶ We selected 1994 as the starting point for both practical and theoretical reasons. We reasoned that articles published in 1994 would have been researched and written during the early 1990s, thus encapsulating the economic restructuring processes unleashed in the recession and NAFTA-related economic

4. During the height of the post-WW2 baby boom birth rates were as high as 28.9 births per 1,000 persons. In 2001, the birth rate was 10.5 per 1,000 persons (Statistics Canada 2005d).

5. The *Alberta Geographer* and *Canada Urban* were excluded from this research due to the fact that they were unavailable either electronically or in bound format from libraries in the TriUniversity Group (Guelph, Waterloo, and Wilfred Laurier).

6. The most current issues at the time of analysis, October and November 2005, available in electronic or bound format for this research are as follows: *The Economic and Technology Development Journal of Canada*: 2005; *Great Lakes Geographer*: 2005, 12(1); *Journal of Canadian Studies*: 2005, 39(3); *Canadian Public Policy*: 2005, 31(3); 2005, 39(3); *Canadian Journal of Regional Science*: 2004, 27(3); *Canadian Journal of Urban Research*: 2005, 14(1); *The Canadian Geographer*: 2005, 49(2); and *Plan Canada*: 2005, 45(3).

changes of the early 1990s. From a practical point of view, the 1994 starting date limited the number of articles to be examined.

We included in our analysis, all articles which contained some mention of one or more Canadian urban area. The lead author of this paper identified these articles by examining the titles of all articles in the selected journals. If the title contained any implicit or explicit mention of an urban area, the urban system, growth or decline, or if the title search was in any way inconclusive, we then read the abstract and/or the article itself to determine whether the article should be included. It is believed that this method was superior to a key-word search because it allowed a thorough examination of the actual content of each article. The method proved time-intensive, especially since one individual made all the selections, thus ensuring consistency. We acknowledge that the possibility exists that some articles that should have been included may have been overlooked, but we are confident that no articles were incorrectly included.⁷

Results and Discussion

The title, abstract and/or article search yielded 275 articles focusing on urban areas with populations exceeding 10,000 persons. Articles were found in all eight journals, although *Canadian Public Policy* and the *Journal of Canadian Studies* provided the smallest number of articles for this research, representing 1.1% and 1.5% respectively. The majority of articles for this research were obtained from *Plan Canada* (35.6%), *The Canadian Geographer* (20.7%), and the *Canadian Journal of Urban Research* (20.7%). All of the articles were then classified according to the following four major categories: *Urban Size*, *Urban Scale*, *Economic Sector*, and *Assumptions on Growth or Decline*.

Urban Size

We organized articles by the size of urban area in the following classes: *Large Urban Areas* that include urban areas with populations that exceed 500,000 persons; *Middle Size Urban Areas* that include urban areas with populations between 50,000 and 500,000 persons; and *Small Urban Areas*, those with populations that are between 10,000 and 50,000 persons (see Table 2). Three-quarters (71.6%) of all articles contained some mention of one or more large urban areas, with 61.8% of all articles focused exclusively on large urban areas. We take

7. We excluded all articles that focused on testing statistical methods, or on physical, natural, or health related processes, although arguably we could have included the last category in a broader analysis of writing on social trends in urban areas. Similarly, we excluded articles dealing with Aboriginal communities in urban areas due to the specific focus of research in this area. We excluded articles focusing on development at the national and provincial scales, unless they mentioned specific urban areas at the regional, city, or neighbourhood levels. Lastly, historical accounts were excluded unless they explicitly addressed the connection between past and current development trends and processes.

TABLE 2 Articles Classified by Urban Size

Urban Size	% of articles	Share of Population of Urban Areas, 2001
Large Urban Areas (>500,000)	61.8	
Large and Middle Size Urban Areas	9.1	63.2
Large, Middle Size, and Small Urban Areas	0.7	
Total	71.6	
Middle Size Urban Areas (50,000-500,000)	20.7	
Large and Middle Size Urban Areas	9.1	
Middle Size and Small Urban Areas	3.3	27.9
Large, Middle Size, and Small Urban Areas	0.7	
Total	33.8	
Small Urban Areas (10,000-50,000)	4.4	
Middle Size and Small Urban Areas	3.3	8.9
Large, Middle Size, and Small Urban Areas	0.7	
Total	8.4	

Source: Authors analysis of journal articles (n=275) and Population Census (Statistics Canada 2001).

TABLE 3 Articles on Large Urban Areas by Metropolitan Region (%)

GTA	Vancouver-Victoria	Montreal	Calgary-Edmonton	Winnipeg	Ottawa-Gatineau	Quebec City	Hamilton
39.1	21.8	16.8	9.6	6.6	5.6	1.0	1.0

Note: 1. n=197 (Number of articles on Large Urban Areas, including those on Large and Middle Size Urban Areas and Large, Middle Size and Small Urban Areas). Articles may concern more than one region.

this as evidence that the largest urban areas are over-represented relative to their share of the population, since they account for only 63.2% of the population of all urban areas. Middle size urban areas were addressed in one third (33.8%) of all articles, and were the sole focus of 20.7% of articles. This constitutes proportionate representation; middle size urban areas account for 27.9% of the population of all urban areas. Small urban areas were examined in 8.4% of articles, typically in relation to middle size urban areas, but were the sole focus for only 4.4% of articles. This suggests that small urban areas are under-represented relative to their 8.9% share of the population of all urban areas.

When divided on a regional basis, it is clear that articles on Southern Ontario dominate the literature. In the *Large Urban Areas* category (Table 3), 39.1% of the articles concerned the Greater Toronto Area (GTA), and another 5.6 and 1.0% of articles discussed Ottawa-Hull and Hamilton respectively. Likewise, in the *Middle Size Urban Areas* category (Table 4), 36.6% of the articles focused on areas in *Southern Ontario*. Within Southern Ontario, *Kitchener-Waterloo* (50.0%) and *Windsor-London* (17.6%) accounted for most articles on middle size urban areas. In Atlantic Canada, which contains seven middle sized urban areas, Halifax

TABLE 4 Articles on Middle Size Urban Areas by Region (%)

Southern Ontario	Atlantic Canada	Northern Ontario	British Columbia	Central Canada	Quebec ¹
36.6	20.4	7.5	5.4	5.4	3.2

Note: 1. French-language literature was not consulted in this research.
 2. n=93 (Number of articles on Middle Size Urban Areas, including those on Large and Middle Size Urban Areas, Middle Size and Small Urban Areas, and Large, Middle Size and Small Urban Areas).

TABLE 5 Articles on Small Urban Areas by Region (%)

British Columbia	Southern Ontario	Atlantic Canada	Northern Ontario	Central Canada
26.1	17.4	13.0	13.0	8.7

Note: 1. n=23 (Number of articles on Small Urban Areas, including those on Middle Size and Small Urban Areas, and Large, Middle Size and Small Urban Areas). Articles may concern more than one region.

accounts for three-quarters (73.7%) of all articles. Only in the *Small Urban Areas* category (Table 5) is *Southern Ontario* less dominant, although almost one-fifth (17.4%) of these articles do discuss the region.

The bias towards large metropolitan areas and Southern Ontario is further reflected in the tone adopted in some articles. For example, one article comments that outside Toronto, “the rest of Canada is a bit of an embarrassment. Big, beautiful, brawny, and brainless” (Berridge 1995: 11). Another study by Whebell divided Ontario into sixteen regions including four in Northern Ontario. However, Northern Ontario is not included in any of the maps and the author comments that “Northern Ontario proper, [is] not dealt with in detail in this paper...” (1994: 36). The uneven geography of knowledge produced about Canada’s urban areas extends beyond the dominance of the major metropolitan areas in terms of population, the settlement of immigrants, and their role as economic centres. One likely source of this bias is the location of academic institutions which house many of the scholars writing about urban areas. As a proxy for the location of scholars, we classified the location of graduate programs in urban geography and planning within the three classes of urban areas (see Table 6). This indicator does not adjust for faculty complement or student numbers, but clearly illustrates our point. There are no graduate urban geography or planning programs in small urban areas, while middle size urban areas have proportionately more programs than their share of the total population in urban areas. Southern Ontario alone is home to two-fifths of all universities with either graduate urban geography or planning programs; northern Ontario has none. It is perfectly reasonable, indeed desirable, for scholars to write about their own back yards, but it must be recognised that this does contribute to the exclusion from the literature of those urban areas that are more likely to be experiencing decline or no growth.

TABLE 6 Universities with Graduate Programs in Urban Geography or Planning by Urban Size (%)

Urban Size	Universities with Graduate Urban Geography Programs	Universities with Graduate Planning Programs	Universities with either Graduate Urban Geography or Planning Programs	Share of Population of Urban Areas, 2001
Large Urban Areas	53.8	61.5	51.9	63.2
Middle Size Urban Areas	46.2	38.5	48.1	27.9
Small Urban Areas	0.0	0.0	0.0	8.9
Total	100	100	100	100

Source: Graduate Programs in Geography include all current non-MSc programs in Human, Urban and Economic Geography, Environmental Studies and Geomatics offered by Departments listed on the CAG website (accessed 16 May, 2006). Graduate Programs in Urban Planning include all current programs in urban, city, rural and regional planning, environmental design and urban studies listed on the Canadian Institute of Planners website (accessed 16 May, 2006).

Urban Scale

Smaller urban areas, which include most of the declining and no-growth urban areas in Canada, are also more likely to be excluded from the academic journals because of the way in which specialized topics or objects of urban analysis are defined. We have attempted to measure this dimension through the concept of *urban scale*, namely: (1) *Entire Urban Areas or Regions* (including the rural-urban interface), and the intra-urban scale, further divided between (2) *Neighbourhoods or Suburbs*, and (3) *Downtown, CBD, or Core areas*. For example, if an article focused on the GTA, or compared specific cities (e.g. Calgary and Edmonton), they were classified in the *Entire Urban Area or Region* category. If the article was reporting on research in a particular neighbourhood in Vancouver or a suburb in Toronto, they were categorized as *Neighbourhood or Suburb*. Finally, articles focused on core areas (including downtowns or CBDs) were placed in the *Downtown, CBD, or Core Area* category. Using this classification scheme, we were able to allocate all articles into a set of mutually exclusive categories.

About two-thirds (67.3%) of all articles focused on entire urban areas or regions. Articles reporting on specific neighbourhoods or suburbs within urban areas or regions accounted for one-fifth of all articles, and 12.7% of articles concerned downtowns, CBDs, or core areas. For the most part, the articles addressing some intra-urban scale (i.e. suburb or core) were concerned with large and middle-sized urban areas. This is not surprising, but to the extent that specialization within the field of urban studies systematically excludes research on smaller urban areas, it also contributes to the exclusion of declining urban areas from the literature.

TABLE 7 Articles classified by Economic Sector of focus (%)

Economic Sector	% of articles
Resource extraction / Manufacturing	31.9
Retail / Commercial / Entertainment	27.7
High-tech / Information Technology/ Telecommunications	18.1
Tourism	16.0
Financial / Insurance / Real Estate / Business and Producer Services	14.9
Foreign Direct Investment / Corporate Head Office location	5.3

Note: 1. n=94 (Number of articles focused on the economy). Articles may focus on one or more sector.

Economic Sectors

Another way in which issues of growth and decline are under-emphasized in the urban literature in Canada arises from the fact that researchers tend to follow growing or leading economic sectors, and because questions of economic development are to some extent regarded as separate from other dimensions of urban development. We were somewhat surprised to find that only about one-third (34.2%) of all articles examined some aspect of the economy. One reason for the relatively low proportion of articles focusing on the economy is the inclusion of *Plan Canada*, which represents over one-third of all articles in the list of journals consulted. This journal tends to focus on land use and spatial planning topics; only 14.3% of *Plan Canada* articles addressed the economy, the lowest rate for all the journals consulted in this research.

Among the articles addressing the economy, over two-thirds (71.3%) were focused on service-related sectors, reflecting the restructuring of the Canadian economy towards an advanced services based economy (see Table 7). Indeed, in 2001, three-quarters (74.7%) of working Canadians were employed in service related sectors (Statistics Canada 2006). Research on economic restructuring and decline in the resource extraction and manufacturing sectors is reported in the journals we consulted. For example, a significant body of work has addressed restructuring of the forestry sector and pulp and paper mills across Canada (Barnes and Hayter 1994; Rees and Hayter 1996; Holmes 1997; Hayter 1997; Norcliffe and Bates 1997; Rose and Villemaire 1997). While many of the articles on economic restructuring pay critical attention to the urban areas hosting declining industries, it is important to recognise that this is a relatively small body of work. Articles in this category accounted for about a third (31.9%) of all economy-focused articles; this represents only one-tenth (10.9%) of all the articles.

In summary, this section has identified a fixation on large metropolitan areas, particularly on Southern Ontario, in articles on urban areas in Canada. In addition,

while a majority of articles focus on the entire urban area or region, a significant portion address some intra-urban scale thus arguably contributing to the exclusion of smaller urban areas. Economic issues are addressed in surprisingly few articles, and those articles that did discuss an economic sector were predominately focused on those that are service-related. This bias emphasizes the winners in the continuing economic restructuring. We argue that all of these features in the literature on urban areas in Canada contribute to a lack of attention on declining and no-growth areas. In the next section, we focus directly on how the academic urban geography, planning, policy-related literature approach the issue of growth or decline.

Growth or Decline

Almost three-quarters (70.9%) of all articles addressed some aspect of growth or decline in urban areas, either implicitly or explicitly. Articles not addressing the issue of growth or decline typically described different planning techniques such as public participation (see McAfee and the CityPlan team 1995; Larsh et al 2002; Keough 2003) or reported studies of various planning topics such as bicycle compatibility, different designs for alleys, and neighbourliness in suburbs (see Blair 2004; MacDonald 2004; Enns and Wilson 1999).

We classified the 195 articles addressing growth or decline according to their implicit or explicit stance on the issue in the following five classes: *Growth Attraction*, *Challenges Associated With Growth*, *Planning for Growth or Growth Management*, *Growth is Uneven*, and *Decline or No-growth*. While almost two-fifths of articles addressing growth and decline did take the stance that is growth is uneven (39%), for the most part articles focused on the attraction (32.3%), consequences (27.2%) and management of growth (11.8%). Articles taking the stance that decline or no growth are continuing trends that need to be planned for, represented only 6.2% of articles addressing growth or decline (and only 4.4% of all articles examined).

Growth Attraction

The sixty-three articles in this category all assume that growth is possible, even though some authors did acknowledge that the costs and benefits of growth may not be equitably distributed. We classified the articles presenting *Growth Attraction* according to the scale and content of the intervention discussed. In terms of scale, just under half (46%) of the articles addressed the *Entire Urban Area*, while a small majority (56%) addressed some intra-urban scale such as the *Core* or *Suburb*. As argued above, articles addressing the intra-urban scale tend to be biased towards larger, growing urban areas. To further understand the content of the twenty-nine articles discussing *Growth Attraction* to entire urban areas, we identified various types of intervention. The interventions most frequently addressed in the articles were *Niche markets* (27.6%), *Local/Community Economic Development* (24.1%), *New Technology* (17.2%) and *Tourism* (13.8%).

Once again, large metropolitan areas and particularly Southern Ontario dominated the category, accounting for two-fifths (41.4%) of the articles discussing ways to attract growth. These articles are not necessarily uncritical of growth attraction strategies; for example Montreal's decline, revival and relative position in the urban hierarchy were the focus of several articles reflecting critically on the political-economy of contemporary growth attraction strategies (see Coffey and Polese 1999; Fontan et al 1999; Collin 2003; Levine 2003; Fontan et al 2004).

In contrast, articles addressing strategies to attract growth to urban areas located outside of large metropolitan areas and Southern Ontario often adopt an uncritically optimistic tone. For example, Sajatovic (1996) discussed how, in the 1990s, North Bay was suffering from the closures of Ontario Hydro and a manufacturing plant, the loss of mining related freight business, and downsizing by the Department of National Defence and the provincial government. He reports that the city responded through the "Baynet Initiative" which focused on information technologies (Sajatovic 1996). Another example from Northern Ontario is Elliot Lake. During the early 1990s, all but one uranium mine in the area closed with massive lay-offs and the most dramatic decline in population of any small municipality in Canada (Leadbeater and Suschnigg 1997). However, according to Tunnock (1998), the city was transforming into a retirement and tourism destination having attracted an arts and culture education program, a provincial centre for addiction treatment, and a centre for research and commercial development of environmental goods, services, and technologies related to the decommissioning of uranium mines. Other case studies of attraction strategies range from place-marketing in Kelowna, British Columbia (Aguilar et al 2005), to high-tech development in St. John's, Newfoundland (O'Brien 2000).

Even when they are critical of the distributional consequences of growth attraction, articles in this category all embody the assumption that urban areas can reverse decline. As such, this literature offers little in the way of guidance to the large number of urban areas that will surely continue to decline despite the creativity, energy and commitment displayed in their growth attraction strategies.

Challenges Associated With Growth

Another category of articles assume that growth is imminent, and hence are concerned with the *Challenges Associated with Growth*. The fifty-three articles in this category address *Planning, Land Consumption, Governance, Costs of Growth* and *Social Conflict*. Typically, these articles were concerned with challenges of planning (37.7%) and governing (22.6%) large, and increasingly dispersed and diverse, metropolitan areas (see Young 1995; Millward 1996; Skaburskis and Tomalty 1999; Walker 2000; Vojnovic 2000; Halseth 2003; Bourne et al 2003; Hanna and Walton-Roberts 2004). One-third (32.1%) of articles addressed the environmental concerns associated with growth. For example, articles were concerned with rural fringe development and loss of prime agricultural land (see Walker 1994; Beesley 1997; Skaburski and Fullerton 1998; Walker 2000; Fletcher

and Thomas 2001; Millward 2002; Halseth 2003). Furthermore, 18.9% of articles were concerned with infrastructure and service related costs of growth / sprawl (see Millward 1996; Halseth 1996; Beesley 1997; Walker 2000; Halseth 2003), while the remaining 11.1% discussed social conflicts between diverse groups located in urban areas (see Majury 1994; Millward 1996; Preston and Lo 2000; Walker 2000; Rose 2001; Halseth 2003).

Planning for Growth or Growth Management

Almost all of the twenty-three articles that discussed various methods of planning for growth or growth management were found in *Plan Canada*. For the most part, articles in this category reported how areas were dealing with rapid growth and dispersion. For example, Fletcher and Thomas (2001) discuss how the Regional District of Nanaimo (British Columbia) developed a Growth Management Plan which is designed to direct growth and protect surrounding rural areas. Likewise, in Vancouver the Liveable Region Strategic Plan of the Greater Vancouver District has helped direct and accommodate over a million people while maintaining productive farmland, improving green space and habitat (Smith and Heid 2004). Other examples included human services planning in York Region (Ontario) and strategic planning in Burlington (Ontario) (Taylor and Piper 2004; Comisso and Kirkpatrick 1999). Once again, articles in this category focused on areas in and around large metropolitan areas and Southern Ontario.

Growth is Uneven

Articles taking the stance that growth is uneven are potentially useful for policy-makers and planners addressing urban areas facing decline, in the sense that this work may provide critical insights as to the nature and causes of relative decline. We determined that a significant proportion, over two-thirds (67.9%), of the 76 articles taking the stance that *Growth is Uneven*, took the stance that growth is uneven between urban areas. A great deal of research has focused on the metropolitan bias in the settlement patterns of new immigrants to Canada (see Siemiatycki and Isin 1997; Ley 1999; Hiebert 2000; Bauder 2003; McDonald 2004), as well as the economic dominance of large metropolitan areas (see Meyer 1996; Rice 1996; Carroll 2001; Halseth 2003; Brown and Baldwin 2003). Demography is the main concern in those articles which discuss uneven growth within cities (see Broadway 1995; Livey 1995; Halseth 1996; Bunting and Filion 2000; Rose 2001). While articles in this category do address the context within which declining or no-growth urban areas exist, the analysis they offer typically does not move beyond description and explanation of decline. As already noted, articles that do offer policy analysis and planning prescription overwhelmingly assume that growth is possible, imminent or already occurring.

Decline or No Growth

Given the uneven pattern of growth in the Canadian urban system, the primary goal of this research is to determine whether the issue of no-growth and decline in Canadian urban areas is being confronted in the academic urban geography, planning, and policy related literature. Of the 275 articles examined in this research, only twelve (4.4%) explicitly mentioned decline and no-growth as trends in the Canadian urban system. These articles identified ongoing decline or no-growth in various urban areas typically in resource-based regions such as Northern Ontario, the interior of British Columbia, and parts of Quebec (see Whebell 1994; Randall and Ironside 1996; Leadbeater and Suschnigg 1997; Barnes et al 2000; Simard and Simard 2004; Hanlon and Halseth 2005).

Only four articles focused on the need for further research and planning with regards to urban areas that are experiencing decline or no growth (see Bunting and Filion 2001; Filion and Bunting 2004; Bourne and Rose 2001; Bourne and Simmons 2003). However, while these articles acknowledge the issue, they do not provide many answers on what these urban areas should do or how they should plan for these expected growth scenarios. For example, Bourne and Simmons (2003) provide many useful insights into the emerging trends in the Canadian urban system, but little information is provided on what social, economic and policy considerations are needed in the declining regions. Bourne and Rose (2001) comment that decline is not necessarily a problem, yet they provide little insight into what planning principles and policies these communities should follow once they have accepted that no growth or decline are inevitable. Likewise, while Filion and Bunting note that such cities "will be compelled to plan for decline rather than expansion" (2004: 21), they also offer little guidance.

Conclusions

In this paper we have examined the English-language literature in eight Canadian urban geography, planning, and policy-related academic journals commencing in 1994. We have shown that urban research is highly fixated on large metropolitan areas, in particular, on Southern Ontario. While there is appreciation of the unevenness in growth rates across the Canadian urban system, all too few articles were focused on decline and no-growth as continuing trends that require further research and planning attention. In their strategy recommendations, articles were keen to discuss methods to attract growth, as well as the challenges associated with growth and with growth management strategies. Issues of direct pertinence to declining and no-growth areas are obscured. When policy-makers and planners seeking solutions for urban areas facing these conditions turn to the literature they may be told why they are in decline, but the guidance they are presented with constitutes, for the most part, denial. Growth is overwhelmingly presented as expected and normal.

There is a pressing need for research on declining and no-growth urban areas for two reasons. First, policy-makers, planners and communities need assistance

in planning for decline. Research that would be useful includes case studies of decision-making processes, examination of the fiscal situation of declining places, and evaluation of tools and policies designed to maintain the quality of everyday life in the face of population decline. Policy-oriented research could explore the potential for alternative models of planning and development that strictly limit the expansion of services and infrastructure to combat the mentality that any growth is good growth (see Hall 2007). Ultimately, these alternative models will need to be incorporated in Provincial Planning Policies to help guide decision-makers in communities experiencing this growth trajectory.

The second reason for research on declining and no-growth urban areas is to tell the story of these places in such a way that allows them to create alternative visions of possible development trajectories. Our survey has shown that the literature on the Canadian urban system repeats, and arguably reinforces, the message that quantitative growth is the only legitimate response to decline. Consumers of this research are implicitly dared to concede defeat if they disagree with this perspective. Instead, research on declining urban places needs to ask what is possible once we abandon the presumption that growth is always attainable, or for that matter, desirable.

References

- Aguiar, L. L.M., P. Tomic and R. Trumper. 2005. "Work Hard, Play Hard: Selling Kelowna, BC, as Year-Round Playground". *The Canadian Geographer*, 49: 123-139.
- Barnes, T. J., J. Britton, W. Coffey, D. Edgington, M. Gertler and G. Norcliffe. 2000. "Canadian Economic Geography at the Millennium". *The Canadian Geographer*, 44: 4-24.
- Barnes, T. and R. Hayter. 1994. "Economic Restructuring, Local Development and Resource Towns: Forest Communities in Coastal British Columbia". *Canadian Journal of Regional Science*, 17: 289-310.
- Bauder, H. 2003. "Immigrants in Urban Labour Markets: Place of Birth and Immigrant Concentrations in British Columbia". *Canadian Journal of Urban Research*, 12: 179-204.
- Beesley, K. 1997. "Metro-Nonmetro Comparisons Of Satisfaction In The Rural-Urban Fringe Southern Ontario". *Great Lakes Geographer*, 4: 57-66.
- Berridge, J. 1995. "Toronto: City of No Extremes". *Plan Canada*. 35: 9-11.
- Blair, T. 2004. "The Bicycle Compatibility of Streets in Downtown Calgary". *Plan Canada*, 44: 41-44.
- Bourne, L. 1995. *Urban Growth and Population Redistribution in North America: A Diverse and Unequal Landscape*. Major Report No. 32. Toronto: University of Toronto, Centre for Urban and Community Studies.
- _____. 2000. "Urban Canada in Transition to the Twenty-First Century: Trends, Issues, and Visions", in T. Bunting and P. Filion (eds.). *Canadian Cities in Transition: The Twenty-First Century*. Don Mills: Oxford University Press, 26-51.

- _____. 2003. "Studying Growth and Change in the Canadian Urban System". *Centre for Urban and Community Studies*. <http://www.urbancentre.utoronto.ca/researchgroups/urbansystems.html>, last accessed November 1st, 2005.
- Bourne, L., and A. Olvet. 1995. *New Urban and Regional Geographies in Canada: 1986-91 and Beyond*. Major Report no. 33. Toronto: University of Toronto, Centre for Urban and Community Studies.
- Bourne, L., M. Bunce, L. Taylor, N. Luka. and J. Maurer. 2003. "Contested Ground: The Dynamics of Peri-Urban Growth In the Toronto Region". *Canadian Journal of Regional Science*, 26: 251-270.
- Bourne, L. and D. Rose. 2001. "The Changing Face of Canada: The Uneven Geographies of Population and Social Change". *The Canadian Geographer*, 45: 105-119.
- Bourne, L. and J. Simmons. 2003. "New Fault Lines? Recent Trends in the Canadian Urban System and their Implications for Planning and Public Policy". *Canadian Journal of Urban Research*, 12 (Supplement): S22-S47.
- Broadway, M. 1995. "The Canadian Inner City 1971-1991: Regeneration and Decline". *Canadian Journal of Urban Research*, 4: 1-20.
- Brown, W. and J. Baldwin. 2003. "The Changing Geography of the Canadian Manufacturing Sector in Metropolitan and Rural Regions, 1976-1997". *The Canadian Geographer*, 47: 116-119.
- Bunting, T. and P. Filion. 2000. "Housing Strategies for Downtown Revitalization in Mid- Size Cities: A City of Kitchener Feasibility Study". *Canadian Journal of Urban Research*, 9: 145-75.
- _____. 2001. "Uneven Cities: Addressing Rising Inequality in the Twenty-First Century". *The Canadian Geographer*, 45: 126-131.
- Carroll, W. 2001. "Westward Ho? The Shifting Geography of Corporate Power in Canada". *Journal of Canadian Studies*, 36: 118-42.
- Coffey, W. and M. Polese. 1999. "Distinct Metropolis for a Distinct Society? The Economic Restructuring of Montreal in the Canadian Context". *Canadian Journal of Regional Science*, 22: 23-40.
- Collin, J. 2003. "Montreal, Depictions of A Mid-Size Metropolis". *Canadian Journal of Urban Research*, 12: 1-7.
- Commisso, T. and A. Kirkpatrick. 1999. "Measuring Results: The City of Burlington's Approach to Strategic Planning". *The Economic and Technology Development Journal of Canada*, <http://www.ecdevjournal.com/>, last accessed July 2008.
- Enns, C. and J. Wilson. 1999. "Sense of Community and Neighbourliness in Vancouver Suburban Communities: The Picket Fence Project". *Plan Canada*, 39: 12-15.
- Filion, P. and Bunting, T. 2004. "Distinctions between Middle-Size and Large Cities: Growth Level, Urban Form and Transportation". *Plan Canada*, 44: 18-21.
- Fletcher, S. and C. Thomas. 2001. "Coping with Growth in the Regional District of Nanaimo, B.C". *Plan Canada*, 41: 16-17.
- Fontan, J., P. Hamel, R. Morin and E. Shragge. 1999. "Community Economic Development and Metropolitan Governance: A Comparison of Montreal and

- Toronto". *Canadian Journal of Regional Science*, 22: 201-217.
- Fontan, J., J. Klein and D.-G. Tremblay. 2004. "Collective Action in Local Development: The Case of Angus Technopole in Montreal". *Canadian Journal of Urban Research*, 13: 317-336.
- Hall, H. 2007. *Being Realistic About Planning in No Growth: Challenges, Opportunities, and Foundations for a New Agenda in the Greater Sudbury, CMA*. M.A. Thesis. Waterloo: University of Waterloo, School of Planning.
- Halseth, G. 1996. "Mapping Residential Redevelopment in a Canadian Suburb". *Canadian Journal of Urban Research*, 5: 136-146.
- _____. 2003. "Attracting Growth 'Back' to an Amenity Rich Fringe: Rural-Urban Fringe Dynamics Around Metropolitan Vancouver, Canada. (suburbanization in Victoria-Vancouver area 1991-2001)". *Canadian Journal of Regional Science*, 26: 297-318.
- Hanlon, N. and G. Halseth. 2005. "The Greying of Resource Communities in Northern British Columbia: Implications for Health Care Delivery in Already-Underserved Communities". *The Canadian Geographer*, 49: 1-24.
- Hanna, K. and M. Walton-Roberts. 2004. "Quality of Place and the Rescaling of Urban Governance: The Case of Toronto". *Journal of Canadian Studies*, 38: 37-67.
- Hayter, R. 1997. "High-Performance Organizations and Employment Flexibility: A Case Study of In Situ Change at the Powell River Paper Mill, 1980-1994". *The Canadian Geographer*, 41: 26-40.
- Hiebert, D. 2000. "Immigration and the Changing Canadian City". *The Canadian Geographer*, 44: 25-43.
- Holmes, J. 1997. "In Search of Competitive Efficiency: Labour Process Flexibility in Canadian Newsprint Mills". *The Canadian Geographer*, 41: 7-25.
- Keough, N. 2003. "Calgary's Citizen-Led Community Sustainability Indicators Project". *Plan Canada*, 43: 35-36.
- Larsh, S., F. Shamley and L. Heidenheim. 2002. "Working Together for Healthy Communities". *Plan Canada*, 42: 13-14.
- Leadbeater, D. and P. Suschnigg. 1997. "Training as the Principal Focus of Adjustment Policy: A Critical View from Northern Ontario". *Canadian Journal of Public Policy*, 23: 1-22.
- Leo, C. and K. Anderson. 2005. "Being realistic about Urban Growth. Alternative Title: We're not Vancouver Get Used to It". Paper presented at the *Canadian Association of Geographers Annual Conference*. London: University of Western Ontario, 31st May to 4th June.
- Leo, C. and W. Brown. 2000. "Slow Growth and Urban Development Policy". *Journal of Urban Affairs*, 22: 193-213.
- Ley, D. 1999. "Myths and Meanings of Immigration and the Metropolis". *The Canadian Geographer*, 43: 2-18.
- Livey, J. 1995. "Urbanizing York Region". *Plan Canada*, 35: 25-28.
- Levine, M.V. 2003. "Tourism-Based Redevelopment and the Fiscal Crisis of the City: The Case of Montreal". *Canadian Journal of Urban Research*, 12: 102-123.
- MacDonald, K. 2004. "Turning Alleys into Assets". *Plan Canada*, 44: 48-51.

- Majury, N. 1994. "Signs of the Times: Kerrisdale, a Neighbourhood in Transition". *The Canadian Geographer*, 38: 265-270.
- McAfee, A. and the CityPlan team. 1995. "Vancouver's City Plan: People Participating in Planning". *Plan Canada*, 35(3): 15-16.
- McDonald, T. 2004. "Toronto and Vancouver Bound: The Location Choice of New Canadian Immigrants". *Canadian Journal of Urban Research*, 13: 85-101.
- Meyer, S.P. 1996. "Canadian Multinational Headquarters: The Importance of Toronto's Inner City". *Great Lakes Geographer*, 3: 1-12.
- Millward, H. 1996. "Greater Halifax: Public Policy Issues in the Post-1960 Period". *Canadian Journal of Urban Research*, 5: 1-17.
- _____. 2002. "Peri-Urban Residential Development in the Halifax Region 1960-2000: Magnets, Constraints, and Planning Policies". *The Canadian Geographer*, 46: 33-47.
- Norcliffe, G. 1994. "Regional Labour Market Adjustments in a Period of Structural Transformation: An Assessment of the Canadian Case". *The Canadian Geographer*, 38: 2-17.
- Norcliffe, G. and J. Bates. 1997. "Implementing Lean Production in an Old Industrial Space: Restructuring at Corner Brook, Newfoundland, 1984-1994". *The Canadian Geographer*, 41: 41-60.
- O'Brien, K. 2000. "St. John's: The Atlantic Entrance to the New World". *Plan Canada*, 40: 23.
- Preston, V. and L. Lo. 2000. "'Asian Theme' Malls in Suburban Toronto: Land Use Conflict in Richmond Hill". *The Canadian Geographer*, 44: 182-190.
- Randall, J. and G. Ironside. 1996. "Communities on the Edge: An Economic Geography of Resource-Dependent Communities in Canada". *The Canadian Geographer*, 40: 17-35.
- Rees, K. and R. Hayter. 1996. "Flexible Specialization, Uncertainty, and the Firm: Enterprise Strategies in the Wood Remanufacturing Industry of the Vancouver Metropolitan Area, British Columbia". *The Canadian Geographer*, 40: 203-218.
- Rice, M. 1996. "Functional Dynamics and a Peripheral Quaternary Place: The Case of Calgary". *Canadian Journal of Regional Science*, 19: 65-82.
- Rose, J. 2001. "Contexts of Interpretation: Assessing Immigrant Reception in Richmond, Canada". *The Canadian Geographer*, 45: 474-493.
- Rose, D. and M. Villemare. 1997. "Reshuffling Paperworkers: Technological Change and Experiences of Reorganization at a Quebec Newsprint Mill". *The Canadian Geographer*, 41: 61-87.
- Sajatovic, S. 1996. "The Baynet Initiative: Job Creation for the City of North Bay". *The Economic and Technology Development Journal of Canada*, <http://www.ecdevjournal.com/>, last accessed July 2008.
- Siemiatycki, M. and E. Isin. 1997. "Immigration, Diversity and Urban Citizenship in Toronto". *Canadian Journal of Regional Science*, 20: 73-102.
- Simard, M. and C. Simard. 2005. "Toward a Culturalist City: A Planning Agenda for Peripheral Mid-Size Cities". *Canadian Journal of Urban Research*, 14 (Supplement): S38-S56.

- Skaburski, A. and C. Fullerton. 1998. "The Lure of Ottawa's Rural Region". *Canadian Journal of Urban Research*, 7: 244-259.
- Skaburski, A. and R. Tomalty. 1999. "Land Value Taxation and Development Activity: The Reaction of Toronto and Ottawa Developers, Planners, and Municipal Finance Officials". *Canadian Journal of Regional Science*, 20: 401-17.
- Smith, B. and S. Heid. 2004. "The Rural-Urban Connection: Growing Together in Greater Vancouver". *Plan Canada*, 44: 36-39.
- Statistics Canada. 2001. *Population Census, 2001: Beyond 20/20 data files*. Retrieved February 15, 2006 via Tri-University Date Resources Website.
- _____. 2002a. "Census Metropolitan Areas (CMAs) and Census Agglomerations (CAs)". *The Census Dictionary 2001*, <http://www12.statcan.ca/english/census01/Products/Reference/dict/geo009.htm>, accessed October 12, 2005.
- _____. 2002b. *Population and Dwelling Counts for CMAs and CAs, 2001 and 1996*, <http://www12.statcan.ca/english/census01/products/standard/popdwell/Table-CMA-N.cfm>, accessed January 9th, 2006.
- _____. 2005a. *Censuses of Population, 1851-2001*. <http://www40.statcan.ca/101/cst01/demo62a.htm>, accessed November 20, 2005.
- _____. 2005b. *Immigrant Population by Place of Birth, by Provinces and Territories (2001 Census)*, <http://www40.statcan.ca/101/cst01/demo34b.htm> and <http://www40.statcan.ca/101/cst01/demo34c.htm>, accessed November 23, 2005.
- _____. 2005c. *Immigrant Population by Place of Birth, by Census Metropolitan Areas (2001 Census)*, <http://www40.statcan.ca/101/cst01/demo35b.htm>, <http://www40.statcan.ca/101/cst01/demo35c.htm> and <http://www40.statcan.ca/101/cst01/demo35e.htm>, accessed November 23, 2005.
- _____. 2005d. *Stork on the Endangered Species List! Canada e-book*. http://142.206.72.67/02/02a/02a_002_e.htm, accessed February 17th, 2006.
- Taylor, S. and C. Piper. 2004. "Human Services Planning in York Region". *Plan Canada*, 44: 38-41.
- Tunnock, G. 1998. "Elliot Nest". *Plan Canada*, 38: 23-26.
- Vojnovic, I. 2000. "Municipal Consolidation, Regional Planning and Fiscal Accountability: The Recent Experience in Two Maritime Provinces". *Canadian Journal of Regional Science*, 23: 49-72.
- Walker, G. 1994. "Planning the Future of Rural Toronto: Structure Planning in the Greater Toronto Area". *Great Lakes Geographer*, 1: 53-66.
- _____. 2000. "Urbanites Creating New Ruralities: Reflections on Social Action and Struggle in the Greater Toronto Area". *Great Lakes Geographer*, 7: 106-118.
- Whebell, C. 1994. "Structure and Process in the Evolving Human Geography of Ontario 1831-1991". *Great Lakes Geographer*, 1: 31-52.
- Young, A. 1995. "Growth, Planning and Government in the Toronto Area". *Plan Canada*, 35: 14-15.