

Abstracts

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COFFEY, W.: "Urban Systems Research: Past, Present and Future. A Panel Discussion (from the 1998 CJRS Conference)". This collection of commentaries presents the views of five experienced researchers concerning the nature and the development of research on urban systems. W. Coffey reviews the major trends in past and present research, and offers some suggestions concerning its future agenda. L. Bourne identifies a number of possible reasons for the decline of research in this area, and presents some ideas as to how researchers in the field could meet the challenge. J. Randall puts the potential utility of urban systems research into perspective with some reflections upon the accuracy of predictions made by researchers a quarter of a century ago, and upon the durability of their research agendas. W. Davies presents an overview of the major themes addressed by urban systems research, and of the major approaches used to address these themes. Finally, R. White focuses upon the most recent approaches in modelling the behaviour of cities. Together, these complementary papers provide insight into the issues, the problems, and the potential of urban systems research.

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RIOUX, C., J.-C. MICHAUD, B. URLI et L.GOSSILIN: «Local development and collective decisions in coastal Quebec» [Développement local et décisions collectives: le cas du Québec-côtier]. The implementation of the Coastal Quebec Special Funds is an example of local organisations involved in implementing a development program. In a vast region like coastal Quebec, the development potential as well as the nature and the intensity of economic problems are variable from one locality to the other. A ranking of communities by Community Future representatives according to development needs and potential provides a tool to help design interventions adapt to the local reality.

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DINC, M., K. HAYNES and W. ANDERSON: "Productivity Change in Canadian Manufacturing: A Multifactor/Shift-Share Approach". The traditional shift-share model measures the combined effects of output growth and productivity change on employment. A region with above average employment growth either has a favorable industry mix or enjoys a competitive advantage over other regions. The shift-share model was extended to decompose the effects of changes in output and productivity on employment. This paper modifies the Rigby-Anderson extension by separating the contribution of labour and non-labour factors to productivity growth in the analysis of regional economic performance, and investigates ten provinces in Canada to assess whether observed changes in employment were due to changes in output, productivity or non-labour factors.

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DESROCHERS, P.: «Commercial Zones: From Theory to Practice» [Les zones d'entreprises: de la théorie à la pratique]. This paper retraces the history of the commercial zone concept, takes stock of the experiences related to it and analyses its failure in practise. In theory, commercial zones eliminate tax and regulation barriers in targeted areas. However, practice often differs substantially from theory. In this paper, commercial zones are placed in a broad historical and theoretical context to explain their origin and to differentiate them from similar experiences. Then, the British and American experiences with commercial zones are summarized before going on to examine how these zones affect both the businesses and people who reside in them. We finally discuss political barriers to the restoration of real commercial zones.

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DOLOREUX, D.: «Technopole Policy and Territory : The case of Laval» [Politique technopolitaine et territoire: le cas de Laval]. Laval has recently proclaimed itself as being a technopole in an effort to create a new economic development strategy. The city has made the attempt to pass from simply being a suburb to being a high-tech city by attempting to create favourable conditions for innovation and the transfer of technology. The author looks to understand the impetus and the mechanisms of adaptation that were behind this technopolitan policy and also to investigate how the benefits of this policy were redistributed. After describing the role that technopoles can play in the evolution of recent economic development policies, the paper analyses the organisation and dynamics of Laval's technopole policy. Particular attention is given to the scale at which technopolitan policy is operated.