

**Policy Transfer of Innovative Sustainability
Principles and Practices:
The Whistler, British Columbia Model**

by

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Abstract

This study examines how innovative policies that seek to embed sustainability principles emerge and how these policies adapt during their transfer. The mountain resort of Whistler, British Columbia, Canada is the focal point of this study as the development of its innovative governance approach towards sustainability served as a potential model for other resort destinations. A case study approach was used with key informant interviews and a document analysis. Subsequently, the transferability of Whistler's governance approach to five other British Columbia resort municipalities was examined through a document analysis. From these five, Harrison Hot Springs was selected for a more in-depth examination using key informant interviews to add greater insights into the policy transfer process.

This study found that Whistler has developed an innovative model of governance based on sustainability principles and practices derived from The Natural Step (a non-profit, sustainability consulting organization). From this foundation, the resort community over several years developed a comprehensive, sustainability policy document known as *Whistler2020*, which is the guide for its innovative governance approach. This approach is frequently referred to as the "Whistler Model". The Whistler Model is being transferred to other newly designated resort municipalities in British Columbia through the Whistler Centre for Sustainability in a facilitated and structured format called the "Quick Start" process. This process creates, through a partnership between the Centre and the recipient community, an Integrated Community Sustainability Plan. Based on evidence from the case studies, the Whistler Model was found to be highly flexible and adaptable to the context and conditions to which it was transferred. However, some challenges were identified - notably the "nature of politics", that has short term interests, thus making long term planning difficult. Other crucial factors for success that were identified included: the need for high levels of continuous public engagement; on-going education concerning sustainability; and, the need for community buy-in.

One of the most important factors in moving towards sustainable tourism is through the transfer of sustainability policies and practices to aid in the development of new governance approaches. Understanding the development of innovative governance towards sustainable futures and the process of policy transfer will contribute to more appropriate and successful diffusion of these ideas.

Keywords: policy transfer; innovation; sustainability; tourism; resort municipality; mobility

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Table of Contents

Approval.....	ii
Partial Copyright Licence	iii
Ethics Statement.....	iv
Abstract.....	v
Acknowledgements	vi
Table of Contents.....	vii
List of Tables.....	x
List of Figures.....	x
List of Acronyms.....	xi
1. Introduction	1
1.1. Goals and Objectives	3
1.2. Report Organization	3
2. Literature Review.....	5
2.1. Introduction	5
2.2. Innovation.....	5
2.2.1. Definition.....	5
2.2.2. Necessary Conditions for Innovation.....	7
2.2.3. Factors Leading to Innovation	9
2.3. Policy Transfer	10
2.3.1. Introduction	10
Policy Transfer.....	11
Policy Mobility	14
Policy Learning and Diffusion.....	17
2.3.2. The Process of Policy Transfer	19
Transfer Agents	23
Motivations.....	27
Implementation and Adaptation.....	28
Types of Policy Transfer	29
Scale of Policy Transfer	30
2.3.3. Policy Transfer Challenges	31
2.4. Discussion of Literature	33
3. Case Study and Methods	36
3.1. Chapter Organization	36
3.2. Study Objectives and Guide	36
3.3. Case Study Selection	38
3.4. Data Collection.....	39
3.4.1. Review of Official Documents	39
3.4.2. Qualitative Key Informant Interviews	40
3.5. Study Sites.....	41
3.5.1. Whistler.....	41

3.5.2.	Harrison Hot Springs.....	46
3.5.3.	Other British Columbia Resort Municipalities	47
3.6.	Study Limitations	48
4.	Results: Policy Innovation and Transfer.....	49
4.1.	Innovation: The Whistler Model	49
4.1.1.	Policy Creation.....	49
4.1.2.	Whistler Model Characteristics	50
4.1.3.	Whistler Centre for Sustainability (WCS).....	52
	Creation	52
	Role and Purpose	53
	Quick Start Process	55
4.1.4.	Changes Over Time	56
4.2.	Policy Transfer	57
4.2.1.	Integrated Community Sustainability Plan (ICSP)	58
4.2.2.	ICSP Document Analysis	60
	General.....	60
	Vision.....	61
	Participants.....	62
	Strategy Areas	62
	Initial Recommended Actions.....	65
	Indicators and Monitoring.....	66
	Targets	68
	Next Steps	69
4.2.3.	Harrison Hot Springs.....	70
	Quick Start Process and Context	71
	Constraints and Issues.....	73
	Role and Impact of the Integrated Community Sustainability Plan (ICSP)	74
5.	Discussion	77
5.1.	Introduction	77
5.2.	Framework	77
5.3.	The Role of The Natural Step (TNS) in the Development of the Whistler Model	79
5.4.	Whistler as a Central Innovator	81
5.5.	Transfer from Whistler to Resort Municipalities.....	84
5.5.1.	Policy Transfer	85
5.5.2.	Degree of Transfer.....	86
5.5.3.	Motivations.....	87
5.5.4.	Agents.....	89
5.5.5.	Transfer Issues	90
5.6.	Transfer from Whistler to Harrison Hot Springs	91
5.6.1.	Transfer Process.....	92
5.6.2.	Consequences	94
5.6.3.	Obstacles.....	95
5.6.4.	Future	97

5.7. Whistler Transferability	98
5.7.1. Constraints/ Resistance	98
5.7.2. Political System.....	99
5.7.3. Engagement	101
5.7.4. Implementation	102
5.8. Governance and Sustainability	102
6. Conclusions.....	105
References.....	107
Appendices.....	114
Appendix 1. Policy transfer framework	115
Appendix 2. Interview Protocol.....	116
Appendix 3. Table of sustainability priority vision statements from each resort municipality's Integrated Community Sustainability Plan (ICSP).....	118
Appendix 4. List of participants involved in the Community Sustainability Action Plan (CSAT) created to aid in the development of each resort municipalities Integrated Community Sustainability Plan (ICSP).....	120

List of Tables

Table 2.1.	Comparison of policy transfer versus policy mobilities.....	16
Table 3.1.	Relationship of new resort municipalities with the Whistler Centre for Sustainability (WCS)	39
Table 3.2.	List of The Natural Step Sustainability (TNS) Principles	44
Table 3.3.	Comparison of case study resort municipalities in British Columbia	47
Table 4.1.	List of resort municipalities with titles of Integrated Community Sustainability Plans (ICSP)	58
Table 4.2.	Quick Start Process	60
Table 4.3.	Number and percentage of strategy area descriptions of success in the resort municipality Integrated Community Sustainability Plans (ICSP) relating to tourism	64
Table 4.4.	Percentage of recommended actions in each Integrated Community Sustainability Plan (ICSP) with overlap with other ICSP recommended actions.....	66
Table 4.5.	Resort municipality Integrated Community Sustainability Plan (ICSP) targets	69

List of Figures

Figure 2.1.	A conceptual model of the policy transfer cycle.....	34
Figure 4.1.	Integrated Community Sustainability Plan (ICSP) process diagram.....	61
Figure 5.1.	Policy and information transfer from Whistler through the Whistler Centre for Sustainability (WCS) to resort municipalities and the conditions affecting the transfer.....	78
Figure 5.2.	Policy transfer cycle from Whistler to Harrison Hot Springs.....	92

List of Acronyms

CSAT	Community Sustainability Action Team
GHG	Green House Gas
ICSP	Integrated Community Sustainability Plan
OCP	Official Community Plan
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
RMOW	Resort Municipality of Whistler
TNS	The Natural Step
WCS	Whistler Centre for Sustainability

1. Introduction

Resort destinations around the globe are facing many challenges that threaten their sustainability. Two of the most pressing of these challenges are first, finding ways to address the current volatile economic conditions and secondly, responding to the often longer-term outcomes of environmental change. To respond to these challenges resort destinations need to find new comprehensive and multi-scalar approaches to policy, infrastructure, product diversification, and corporate restructuring (Gill 2011). Since the financial crisis in 2007-8 when the global economy experienced a major decline there has been extreme financial uncertainty leading to debate concerning how to transition from the models of rapid growth that have characterized recent decades to longer term more sustainable approaches (Gill and Williams 2011). Further, heightened awareness of the need for environmentally responsible behavior, not only at the individual but also the corporate level, has resulted in seeking a range of policy changes at various scales of governance. For example, the broad-ranging and long-term significance of climate change presents challenges that are difficult to adapt to despite the fact that, for resort destinations, environmental factors play an important role in tourists' experiences. Balancing responses to both immediate and long-term pressures adds to the difficulty of managing for a sustainable future. The aim of this thesis is to examine how in a resort destination policy and practices, based on principles of sustainability, emerge and in turn are transferred to other resorts. A case study in British Columbia, Canada is employed to examine transitional governance approaches.

British Columbia is internationally known for its natural beauty and opportunities for a broad range of recreational activities. It is home to a large number of rural tourism destinations including Whistler, which since its development in 1975, has developed over a relatively short period of time into an internationally recognized, successful and competitive leading mountain tourism destination receiving over two million visitors annually (Gill and Williams 2011). Whistler was the first resort in British Columbia to be designated a "resort municipality" (Gill and Williams 2011). Resort municipalities have

increased control and taxation benefits in order to accommodate their specific needs as tourist destinations. Whistler's experience has demonstrated how increased controls and powers, such as the increased taxation powers at the municipal level, can be highly successful for tourism-based communities. Since its inception as a resort municipality, Whistler has a history of using innovative management approaches. The original management and governance model was pro-growth. Around 2000, this governance model changed in response to the Resort Municipality of Whistler (RMOW) reaching its prescribed growth limit capacity. It shifted into a more community-driven form of governance with a focus on sustainability. This governance shift by the RMOW has been studied and discussed by Gill and Williams (2011).¹ The two governance models, pro-growth and sustainability are very different. The pro-growth model was centered on continuous economic growth. The sustainability model has policy objectives focusing on distribution rather than growth and the primary constituency is civic leaders rather than businesses. Resorts around the world have been looking to Whistler because of its success and innovative governance model towards sustainability.

In order to respond to the decline of rural and resource-based industries, tourism has been successfully promoted as a desirable option to diversify economies in many rural communities. By 2002 in British Columbia, the resort sector was responsible for 20 percent of the \$1.9 billion provincial tourist expenditure and employed roughly 26,000 people (BC Resort Task Force 2004). To further stimulate the resort destination sector the provincial government of British Columbia created the BC Resort Task Force in 2003. The task force had two goals, first to enhance partnerships and resort development, and second to identify barriers and the means to eliminate barriers to the development, creation, and expansion of British Columbia resorts (BC Resort Task Force 2004). The task force also sought ways to support year-round operations because it was recognized that these hold the greatest opportunities for sustainability and growth (Gill 2011). Based on the recommendations from the BC Resort Task Force in 2004, the Resort Municipality Initiative was created in 2006 as part of the Ministry of Jobs, Tourism

¹ This thesis is part of a larger study being led by Dr. Alison Gill and Dr. Peter Williams at Simon Fraser University. Their work has focused on governance shifts in resort municipalities in British Columbia, particularly Whistler.

and Innovation, and the Ministry of Community Sport and Cultural Development. Since 2007, 13 new resort municipalities have been designated (RuralBC 2011).

1.1. Goals and Objectives

The objective of this study is to examine the innovation and mobility of policies and practices towards sustainable futures in resort settings. I examine this objective in a study of how a governance model developed in Whistler that was based on principles of sustainable practice, was transferred to other resort municipalities in British Columbia.

There are two components to the overall research question:

- How do innovative policies that seek to embed sustainability principles emerge?
- How are these policies adapted during transfer to other places?

In the context of the empirical study, the more detailed research questions are refined as follows:

- How did Whistler's innovative governance approach develop?
- Was Whistler's governance approach flexible in its transfer to other resort municipalities in British Columbia?

1.2. Report Organization

This document is organized into six chapters. Chapter 1 provides a general background and a set of goals and objectives for the study as well as the overall and specific research questions. Chapter 2 gives a thorough literature review to frame and contextualize the research. More specifically it presents a brief overview of relevant literature on innovation and then examines the policy transfer literature in more detail. Chapter 3 provides background information on the case study sites and outlines the methods used for the official document analysis and qualitative key informant interviews. There is also a brief description of the study's limitations. Chapter 4 explains the results of the official document analysis and key informant interviews organized into three sections. The first section addresses the research question concerning the development

of the Whistler Model, the second section discusses the transferability of the Whistler Model to other resort destinations and the third section explores the case study of Harrison Hot Springs in depth. Chapter 5 proposes a framework for understanding the transfer of policy between the case study locations and discusses results of this study in the context of the literature presented in Chapter 2. Conclusions are offered in Chapter 6.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Introduction

This literature review examines two large bodies of literature; innovation and policy transfer. While the core focus of this study is on policy transfer, it is first necessary to understand how innovations underlying the policies that are transferred are developed. Following this review of pertinent innovation literature, that includes definitions, necessary conditions for innovation, and factors leading to innovation, a more nuanced body of work on aspects of policy transfer is presented. This includes a review of terms (policy transfer, policy mobility, policy learning, and policy diffusion) and processes (transfer agents, motivations, implementation and adaptation, types, and scale) as well as challenges leading to policy failure. The chapter concludes by bringing the concepts and literature on innovation and policy transfer together through discussion and a model developed for this study.

2.2. Innovation

2.2.1. *Definition*

Innovation originates from the Latin word that means to create something new, "innovatio" (Kvam and Straete 2010; Peters and Pikkemaat 2006; Weiermair 2004). The concept of innovation has been defined in many different ways (Hall and Williams 2008; Kvam and Straete 2010; Mohr 1969; Schumpeter 1939; Stevens and Crook 2008). This variation is largely due to the range of purposes when examining innovation in different sectors or contexts (Peters and Pikkemaat 2006). Below is a selection of innovation definitions found throughout the literature.

Mohr (1969) defines innovation as, "the successful introduction into an applied situation of means or ends that are new to that situation" (Mohr 1969, p. 112). This is a fairly broad definition because innovation is context specific, where a practice or process only has to be new within a specific context instead of being the original innovation. Most innovations in practice are diffused and adapted away from what was originally intended. Innovation can be defined even more broadly however, such as by Hall and Williams (2008),

innovation refers to the process of bringing any new, problem solving idea into use. Ideas for reorganizing, cutting cost, putting in new budgetary systems, improving communication or assembling products in teams are also innovations. Innovation is the generation, acceptance and implementation of new ideas, processes, products or services... Acceptance and implementation is central to this definition; it involves the capacity to change and adapt. (Hall and Williams 2008, p. 5)

Hall and Williams' definition includes the introduction of ideas that could be difficult to confirm or quantify in practice. It is also more specific in outlining the different types (new ideas, processes, products or services), but importantly also includes the notion that an innovation must be implemented to be an innovation. It is widely accepted in the literature that an innovation differs from an invention because innovations must be implemented whereas an invention is simply creating something new (Hjalager 2010; Mohr 1969; Peters and Pikkemaat 2006). Inventiveness and innovation are very different from one another and come about from different factors. They are interlinked however because a newly invented policy if implemented would be an innovation. Innovation adoption and creation are linked to wealth, size, environment, motivation, ideology, competence, level of professionalism, decentralization, leadership, and other variables (Mohr 1969). Inventiveness is largely related to an individual's level of creativity and to an organization's structure (degree of hierarchy) and level of formality (Mohr 1969). Creativity can also be confused with innovation but creativity is the "condition for producing innovation" (Macchiavelli 2009, p. 105). Creativity tends to, but does not necessarily, lead to innovation (Macchiavelli 2009).

A working definition of innovation used by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) when collecting their data is, "the implementation of a new or significantly improved product (good or service), or process, a new marketing

method, or a new organisational method in business practices, workplace organisation or external relations" (OECD & Statistical Office of the European Communities 2005, p. 46). The OECD definition is tailored towards the business sector and is more vague because it does not define the term "new" or indicate whether new is context specific or not.

Discussion of what constitutes a large enough change to be considered an innovation and whether innovations need to be successful has taken place in the literature (Kvam and Straete 2010; Schumpeter 1934). Schumpeter (1934) suggests there is a difference between an innovation and a minor change; however it is unclear where the line is drawn between the two (Kvam and Straete 2010). This vagueness has led to a certain degree of uncertainty when classifying innovations. Hersklett's (1986) definition of innovation specifies that an innovation does not need to be successful. Successful is defined, in this context, as an innovation resulting in increased overall value through lowering cost or increasing quality (Kvam and Straete 2010). Innovations is implemented to achieve success and it is usually discontinued if it is unsuccessful.

The definition of innovation varies with respect to its breadth and context. For this paper the inclusive definition by Hall and Williams (2008) will be used.

2.2.2. *Necessary Conditions for Innovation*

Early work by Mansfield (1963), discusses four propositions about the relation between a firm's willingness to introduce an innovation and the firm's characteristics (Mansfield 1963). The first proposition is that the amount of time in which a firm waits before introducing an innovation is inversely related to the size of the firm (assuming other factors are the same) (Mansfield 1963). This occurs due to the high costs and perceived risks of introducing an innovation. The second is that the size of a firm is related to the amount of time a firm waits before implementing an innovation with amount of time decreasing (increasingly so) as the firms size increases. The third is that the length of time a firm waits before introducing an innovation is also related to the expected level of gains from the innovation (Mansfield 1963). Therefore the amount of time is inversely related to the level of expected gains. The fourth and last is that as the

amount of profitability or success in an innovation increases, the length in time to implement the innovation decreases (Mansfield 1963).

Level of innovation of a firm or an organization's willingness to adopt new innovations is suggested by Mohr (1969) to be a function of the strength of the obstacles opposed to innovation, the resources available to overcome these obstacles, and the amount of motivation to innovate. The more barriers or costs there are to the implementation of an innovation the less likely it is that it will be implemented (Mohr 1969). This simple function is very useful in conceptualizing the driving forces of innovation. It is important to note however, that obstacles in the short term can be motivators in the long run. For example, major external trends are recognized to encourage innovation as in the example of climate change and the economic crisis which are both obstacles to economic growth in the short term but encourage innovations to respond to the problems that will arise in the long term (Hjalager 2010). Mohr (1969) also suggests that the surrounding environment (market conditions, technological changes, consumer demands, labor market, local community, and physical environment) are frequent motivators in promoting the uptake of innovations (Mohr 1969). When the environment is rapidly changing an organization is most likely to adopt innovations because the surrounding environment is creating different/new needs. Other important quantitative factors that correlate to innovation include organization size, available resources, and wealth (Mohr 1969; Rogers 1995). Wealth and size has been found to be one of the most important factors for an organization to be willing to adopt an innovation (Eisenstadt 1963; Hage and Aiken 1967; Mansfield 1963). Other less important factors include; complexity, organizational structure decentralization, organizational goals breadth, and dominance of an ideology (Dolowitz and Marsh 1996; Mohr 1969).

It has been found that innovation creation is a continuous rather than episodic process for most enterprises (Hjalager 2010). This continuous process involves a number of main actors in the innovation system; individual firms, institutions, public authorities, research, and development (Svensson *et al.* 2005). Innovations can have three different types of consequences; desirable versus undesirable, direct versus indirect, and anticipated versus unanticipated (Rogers 1995). Innovations are most often

implemented when the consequences are expected to be desirable, direct, and anticipated (Rogers 1995).

2.2.3. Factors Leading to Innovation

Hjalager (2010) suggests that there are three theoretical schools that address the factors leading to innovation; Schumpeterian approach, technology-push/demand-push paradigm, and Marshallian innovation systems or innovation cluster approach.

The Schumpeterian approach credits entrepreneurs with making major contributions to the dynamics of innovation. This contribution is seen as a continual disturbance that affects the overall equilibrium of the market (Schumpeter 1934). Schumpeter (1934) also widely discusses the concept of entrepreneurs as "creative destructors" who change or shift their customers' preferences along with product and ideal standards through their innovativeness (Hjalager 2010). Entrepreneurs are also agents of change who aid in path creation (Garud and Karnøe 2001). Within tourism studies, Hall and Williams (2008) characterize them as individual "heroes" who, as innovators, have affected the course of history in tourism (Hall and Williams 2008). Not all entrepreneurs are successful however, as many find it difficult to either enter the market or subsequently fail (Hjalager 2010). Entrepreneurship in tourism plays an important part in increasing overall competitiveness and redirection of tourism products (Hjalager 2010).

The technology-push/demand-pull paradigm perceives the driving forces of innovation being primarily science and technology; however, the impacts of the environment including political issues and market changes are included as important factors (Hjalager 2010). In mainstream tourism research, market demand is seen to be the driving force behind innovation (Hall and Williams 2008; Hjalager 2010). For example, a technology innovation will result in higher productivity or quality that in turn affects the organisation, and with time the production of new services and products (Hjalager 1997). Recent technology that has impacted the tourism sector includes the use of iPhones, iPads, and GPS systems that can be used as guide services by tourists or as tools in enterprises (Hjalager 2010). New technological innovations require a significant amount of knowledge to implement and use. They also further disperse

knowledge and information (Hjalager 2010). This technology-push/demand-pull paradigm suggests that technology advancements are the primary force behind other non-technology centered innovations in the tourism sector.

Rogers (1995) identified five perceived characteristics of innovations that affect the likelihood or rate of adoption; relative advantage, compatibility, complexity, trialability, and observability. The relative advantage is the perceived degree to which the considered innovation is better than what is already implemented. The compatibility is the level to which the innovation meets the pre-existing values, norms, needs, and past experiences of where it is being adopted. The complexity of an innovation is the perceived level of difficulty of being used and understood. The trialability of an innovation is whether the innovation can be experimented with, without having to fully implement the innovation. The observability is the degree to which the innovation and its results will be able to be seen or felt by others. An innovation is seen as being more attractive to implement if there are high degrees of perceived relative advantage, compatibility, complexity, trialability, and observability (Rogers 1995). Rogers (1995) (like Mohr (1969)), also suggests that size of an organization is an important determinant of level of innovation. Size of an organization is related to, "total resources, slack resources, technical expertise of employees, organizational structure, and so on" which can act as surrogate measures of size which relate to innovation (Rogers 1995, p. 379). There are clearly many motivators and factors that affect innovation and it is apparent that driving forces and obstacles are always present.

2.3. Policy Transfer

2.3.1. Introduction

This study focuses on the concepts of policy transfer and mobility. However, there are many different terms originating from various disciplines that apply to policy transfer and mobility including; policy learning (Bennett and Howlett 1992; Stone 1999), lesson-drawing (James and Lodge 2003; Rose 1993), 'emulation' and 'harmonisation' (Bennett 1991), policy convergence (Bennett 1991; Benson and Jordan 2011; Stone 2004), policy learning (Bennett and Howlett 1992; Benz and Fürst 2002; May 1992) and

policy diffusion (Dente and Coletti 2011; Eyestone 1977; McCann 2011a). It is important to note that some find that several of the concepts policy transfer encompasses are contradictory and diverse (James and Lodge 2003). There is also disagreement concerning whether the term “policy transfer” encompasses such concepts as diffusion, learning, convergence, and mobility. For example, policy transfer has been considered to be a type of policy diffusion but conversely, policy diffusion has also been considered to be a type of policy transfer by different scholars (Marsh and Sharman 2009). Also, policy transfer and policy diffusion have been thought to be separate types of lesson-drawing (Stone 2004). However, some argue that policy transfer is not a type of learning, even though learning can take place during the transfer process, and that policy learning and policy transfer are very separate processes (Dolowitz 2009). Additionally the concept of policy learning has been defined as a subset of policy transfer, however, simultaneously, policy transfer has been also considered a subset of policy learning (Bennett and Howlett 1992; Bulkeley 2006; Wolman and Page 2002). Policy transfer has also been seen as a form of policy analysis that involves predictions of potential policies or programs being assessed by policy makers (Mossberger and Wolman 2003). There are clearly high levels of controversy over the overlap and interconnectedness in the literature of these terms and therefore it is important to distinguish between them and ensure the definitional distinction is clear with respect to how they are used.

Policy Transfer

Policy transfer is defined by Dolowitz and Marsh (1996) broadly as, "a process in which knowledge about policies, administrative arrangements, institutions etc. in one time and/or place is used in the development of policies, administrative arrangements and institutions in another time and/or place" (Dolowitz and Marsh 1996, p. 344). Dolowitz and Marsh's (2000) definition of policy transfer (in their slightly later work as compared to 1996) is the most quoted and is where "knowledge about policies, administrative arrangements, institutions and ideas in one political setting (past or present) is used in development of policies, administrative arrangements, institutions and ideas in another political setting" (Dolowitz and Marsh 2000, p. 5). The later definition by Dolowitz and Marsh (2000) is only slightly different to the 1996 definition with only minor wording changes. Benson and Jordan (2011) argue that the policy transfer definition by Dolowitz and Marsh (1996) has "stood the test of time". More recent

work by Dolowitz (2009) provides a more specific, reworked definition of policy transfer to be "the processes by which agents become aware of information relating to the policy domain of one political system and subsequently transfer this into another policymaking system - where it is used or stored for potential use" (Dolowitz 2009, p. 7). This definition focuses on the system of politics as being the contexts between which policies are transferred and the specific role of agents who transfer the information. This definition (along with Dolowitz's previously mentioned definitions) omits what has been identified by others to be crucial, that a policy must be implemented (in a new context) and not just "stored for potential use" as is stated in Dolowitz's (2009) definition and noted to by Wolman and Page (2002).

Stone (1999) provides a different policy transfer definition, to "import innovatory policy developed elsewhere in the belief that it will be similarly successful in a different context" (Stone 1999, p. 52). It is important to note that in Stone's (1999) definition, it is specifically "innovatory policy" that is imported and diffused. This distinction is because it is innovative policies that are valued and are seen as being something new to learn from. With Dolowitz and Marsh's (1996) definition of policy transfer, the broad transfer of knowledge and information is highlighted compared to the narrower definition by Stone (1999) that refers to more specific, isolated policies being transferred. Wolman and Page (2002) argue that for policy transfer to occur it requires that knowledge must be transferred but then most importantly utilized, for example in the adoption of a policy or program. However, Wolman and Page (2002) also have a broad definition of policy transfer to include not only the transfer of policies themselves, but also concepts, goals, ideas, program designs, structure, and techniques that underlie the policy (Wolman and Page 2002). Bissell *et al.* (2011) describes the policy transfer process as being when "a strategy developed elsewhere is taken up and applied in another policy context" (Bissell *et al.* 2011, p. 1140). Therefore, policy transfer is a relatively broad term with some variation in its definitions throughout the literature that encompasses many different types of transfer that includes not only intact policies but also elements that contribute to the creation of new policies. It is also important to note that a transferred policy can be defined as an "innovatory policy" (Stone 1999), or as a type of innovation.

The majority of studies on policy transfer either involve quantitative analysis of diffusion patterns and adoptions of policies in government or case studies (Wolman and

Page 2002). Policy transfer studies tend to use qualitative methods and conduct detailed analysis on a small number of case studies (two or more) (Marsh and Sharman 2009). Most commonly the case studies examine policy transfer within or between countries (Marsh and Sharman 2009). Research on policy transfer in the past has used a series of questions as their framework to analyse policy transfer (Bennett 1991; Dolowitz and Marsh 1996; Dolowitz and Marsh 2000; Rose 1991). For example Dolowitz and Marsh (1996; 2000) propose a series of questions in their work that has been used for a number of policy transfer studies. These questions include;

- Who transfers policy?
- Why engage in policy transfer?
- What is transferred?
- Are there different degrees of transfer?
- From where are lessons drawn? What factors constrain policy transfer?
- How is the process of policy transfer related to policy 'success' or 'failure'?

Dolowitz and Marsh (1996; 2000) have constructed these questions into a conceptual framework (Appendix 1). This model is meant to be, "a heuristic device that allows us to think more systematically about the processes involved" (Dolowitz and Marsh 2000, p. 14). Other work has also used this model (Jacoby 2000; Jones and Newburn 2002; Lamour 2002).

Different authors have suggested that policy transfer research and the concept have become problematic. Bennett (1997) argues there has been an almost over-theorization in the literature on policy transfer. In particular within this literature the focus has been on who learns, what is learnt, and the resulting impacts (Bennett 1997). Mossberger and Wolman (2003) also argue that policy transfer literature is focused on the how, when, and why policies are adopted as compared to the policy diffusion literature that focuses on the patterns and networks of diffusion (Mossberger and Wolman 2003). Peck and Theodore (2001) suggest that the problem with policy transfer is that it "tends to suggest the importation of fully formed, off-the-shelf policies, when in fact the nature of this process is much more complex, selective, and multilateral" (Peck and Theodore 2001, p. 449). James and Lodge (2003) have also questioned the usefulness of the terms and concepts of policy transfer and policy learning. Their

concern lies in the non-clarity of the difference between these concepts and regular policy making and why these occur (James and Lodge 2003). Bennett (1997) identifies the problem to be that there is insufficient systematic research of cross-national policy learning that identifies the influences on policy choice for transfer.

Policy Mobility

Policy mobility is a relatively recent concept as compared to the rest of the policy transfer literature and is therefore not fully developed (McCann 2008; McCann 2011b; Peck 2011). However, mobility has been defined as a "meaningful and power-laden geographical phenomenon" which involves "the displacement of an object from A to B" (Cresswell 2006, p. 4). However, policy mobility is about more than the simple transfer of a policy from point A to B, but includes the connections and networks that are formed between sites of policy-making and policy actors (Peck and Theodore 2010). Policy mobilities consider policies as being in motion and interconnected, in continuous mutation and transformation (Peck 2011). The mobility concept "encompasses both the large-scale movements of people, objects, capital and information across the world, as well as the more local processes of daily transportation, movement through public space and the travel of material things within everyday life" (Hannam *et al.* 2006, p. 1).

In the mobilities paradigm, the concept of place is important and places are considered mobile, "becoming or traveling, slowly or quickly, through greater or shorter distances and within networks of both human and non-human agents" (Hannam *et al.* 2006, p. 13). It has also been noted that, "places are about relationships, about the placing of peoples, materials, images and the systems of difference that they perform" (Hannam *et al.* 2006, p. 13). As well, "places are dynamic, they are also about proximities, about the bodily co-presence of people who happen to be in that place at that time, doing activities together, moments of physical proximity between people that make travel desirable or even obligatory for some" (Hannam *et al.* 2006, p. 13). The mobilities approach suggests that there are connections or at least loose connections of networks that exist which link all places so that no single place is completely isolated (Sheller and Urry 2006).

The way in which knowledge is interconnected to place is important to the mobility perspective. In the mobility approach places are perceived as static locations

that push and pull people to visit (Sheller and Urry 2006). Knowledge is seen to flow globally, but it must be embedded into a specific place, social, and institutional context in order for it to be produced or "actionable" (McCann 2011a). This knowledge can move through expert systems that are often involved in mobilities and have become specialized, sometimes based on certain consultancy companies or university degree programmes (Hannam *et al.* 2006). This knowledge is often spread through stories and the sharing of these stories through meetings, etc., which give momentum and shape mobile policies (McCann 2011a). Knowledge and mobilities exist and move within and through place through nodes and fixed infrastructures (McCann 2011a). A limiting factor that can affect the mobility and movement through space is resource availability, identity, political and institutional context (McCann 2011a).

The mobility process needs to be conceptualized "as produced by the social, spatial, institutional, ideological, and political contexts in which they are developed, applied, transferred, and adopted" (McCann 2011a, p. 122). Policies that are mobile tend to never travel or diffuse without being changed, but instead are often in pieces or synthesized models which are already transforming policies instead of replicas of the original policy (Peck and Theodore 2010). These mobile policies are affected by the landscape and they themselves also remake this landscape (Peck and Theodore 2010). High rates of policy mobility do not result in a unification of a singular best way or "policy monopoly" because there is the constant production of uneven spatial developments (Peck and Theodore 2010).

Mobility research emerged out of the concern over the staticness of social science theory, research that did not take into account communication and the movement of people enhanced through technology advancement (Sheller and Urry 2006). Diverse research into the different mobilities and connections between them have been brought about by transportation and communication infrastructure developments and new cultural and social practices of mobility along with the resulting challenges of rescaling and governance (Hannam *et al.* 2006). Mobility research draws heavily on pre-existing work on scale, relationality, and fixity-mobility (McCann 2011a). Mobility research has been described as, "concerned first with the patterning, timing, and causation of face-to-face copresence" (Sheller and Urry 2006, p. 217). Mobile policies can be effectively studied through comparative case studies (McCann 2011a). This

research is considered to be important because mobility and movement are crucial to various aspects of society, economy, politics, environment, and issues around level (too much or too little) can be problematic (Hannam *et al.* 2006).

Examining policy transfer as policy mobility has been a relatively new and recent approach/conceptual framework. Based on recent work by Peck (2011), a comparison between policy transfer and policy mobility is summarized in Table 2.1.

Table 2.1. Comparison of policy transfer versus policy mobilities

	Policy transfer	Policy mobilities
Origins	Disciplinary: political science	Transdisciplinary: anthropology, geography, heterodox political science, comparative political economy, science studies, sociology, urban planning
Epistemological foundations	Positivist/rationalist	Postpositivist/constructivist
Privileged analytical object	'Successful' transfers: conspicuous jurisdictional border-crossing	Policies in motion/interconnection: continuous transformation and mutation
Social action	Instrumental: bounded rationality	Strategic: embedded calculation
Dynamic	Frustrated replication of best (or better) practices	Contradictory reproduction of connected but unevenly developing policy regimes
Spatiality	Sequential diffusion	Relational connection
Mode of explanation	Reification of essentialized design features	Contextually sensitive analysis of emergent capacities
Politics of knowledge	Abstracts from politics of knowledge and practice	Problematises politics of knowledge and practice

Source: Peck 2011, p. 775; used with permission.

Most importantly policy mobility views policies as being highly mobile and adaptive, occurring at many different scales (McCann 2011a). This is in contrast to the traditional concept of policy transfer which approaches policies as being more static, less mobile, and transferred in different ways at a limited number of scales (McCann 2011a). McCann (2011a) takes the approach towards policy mobility and transfer, that transfer is most affected by "embedded institutional legacies and imperatives" (p. 109) (path dependency) rather than an unconstrained, volunteeristic process with fully rationally agents of transfer who "scan" for new policies objectively, ignoring fashionable policies but focus on best practice. McCann (2011a) also argues that the concept of policy transfer is problematic because it perceives the policy transfer process as abstract and not a social process (McCann 2011a). From a policy mobility perspective, both the policy and the policy knowledge change and adapt when transferred, shared, and learnt (McCann 2011a). Lastly, policy mobilities are considered to be more transdisciplinary than policy transfer, which is based in political science (Peck 2011).

Policy Learning and Diffusion

As in the case of policy transfer, there are also varying interpretations of the meaning of policy learning (Betsill and Bulkeley 2004). Policy learning is defined by Bennett and Howlett (1992), as "the general increase in knowledge about policies" (Bennett and Howlett 1992, p. 288-289). Hall (1988) has a longer definition with policy learning being the "deliberate attempt to adjust the goals or techniques of policy in the light of the consequences of past policy and new information so as to better attain the ultimate objects of governance" (Hall 1988, p. 6). However, learning has also been considered as a less conscious activity. Hall (1993) emphasizes that policy learning is about the ideas and beliefs behind policy approaches that are changed based on the transfer of ideas and knowledge (Hall 1993). Therefore the result of this knowledge transfer may lead to a policy transfer, a policy innovation, or a policy termination (Stone 1999). Policy learning is also considered to be a form of "organizational learning" that is done by governments, but more specifically only humans can learn and therefore it is the individuals who make up governments that are doing the policy learning (Wolman and Page 2002). The learning can also deal with more than just the physical policy but also with other parts around policy (problems, goals, instruments, and implementation designs) (May 1992). Unlike policy transfer however, policy learning can occur even if

adoption of the transferred policy is not implemented (Wolman and Page 2002). Policy learning also tends to be voluntary by nature unlike policy transfer, which can be voluntary or coercive (Dolowitz and Marsh 1996). Policy learning is considered to be a desirable goal in policy analysis and debate (May 1992).

Policy diffusion is defined as "any pattern of successive adoptions of a policy innovation" (Eyestone 1977, p. 441). Such diffusion has been defined as occurring "when one government's decision about whether to adopt a policy innovation is influenced by previous choices by other governments" (Graham *et al.* 2008, p. 3). The four main processes or mechanisms of policy diffusion as set out by Graham *et al.* (2008) are learning, competition, coercion, and socialization (Graham *et al.* 2008). Learning is crucial because it is what solves problems and improves policy. Competition and the desire to remain competitive is a strong and important motivator in policy adoption. Coercion can also take place when certain actors try to push or impose a specific desired policy solution on another government. Socialization occurs when actors are inducted into the norms of a community and aids in policy diffusion.

Policy diffusion results in a geographically uneven distribution of policy because of the many factors at play, such as resource access and required pre-conditions for transfer of certain policies (McCann 2011a). Work on policy diffusion focuses on "chronological and geographic patterns of the adoption of a policy innovation across government units" (Mossberger and Wolman 2003, p. 429). The concept of diffusion also implies there is a single place where an invention or innovation is created, and then is diffused to other locations (McCann 2011a). Due to this, diffusionism has been critiqued as being elitist in that it implies there are few (scarce) inventive locations where innovations/inventions are diffused from that are progressive and advanced (McCann 2011a).

There are a number of models of diffusion that have been developed in the diffusion literature such as by Rogers (1995) and Akrich *et al.* (2002). Rogers (1995) states that there are four main factors in the diffusion of innovations; the innovation, communication channels, time, and social system. Communication channels are key to the effective diffusion of innovations to spread relevant information. Time includes how long it takes to implement an innovation, when the innovation is adopted (early versus

later adopters), and rate of innovation adoption. The social system affects the norms of diffusion, how innovation decisions are made, and roles of different individuals in the decision making process. Rogers (1995) also identifies five types of adopters that are categorized based on when an innovation was adopted beginning with; innovators, early adopters, early majority, late majority, and laggards. Once an innovation has been adopted and tested there are more and more individuals willing to implement. Innovators are the first to adopt an innovation and tend to be highly active in gathering information about new ideas (Rogers 1995). They also are more willing to cope with high levels of uncertainty when adopting an innovation (Rogers 1995). Innovators also tend to have large mass media exposure and large interpersonal networks expanding outside their local system (Rogers 1995).

Akrich *et al.* (2002) identifies two different types of models to explain the success of an innovation. The first is the "diffusion model" where an innovation is appreciated for its intrinsic properties and therefore becomes a widespread innovation. The second is the "model of interestment" where an innovation is spread by agents of transfer who were active participants in the development of the original innovation. The "diffusion model" outlines a system where the actors are passive as compared to the "model of interestment" where the actors involved are active (Akrich *et al.* 2002). In reality the diffusion of innovations most likely occurs due to a combination of active and inactive actors.

2.3.2. *The Process of Policy Transfer*

A number of agents and circumstances are required for policy transfer to successfully take place. Stone (1999) states policy transfer involves, "knowledge about policies, administrative arrangements or institutions"... "across time or space in the development of policies, administrative arrangements and institutions elsewhere" (Stone 1999, p. 51). Therefore, policy transfer requires knowledge to be transferred, some kind of agents to transfer the knowledge, and policy making bodies to send, receive, and implement the information. Policy transfer also must involve the utilization of policy or knowledge from somewhere else, not just the acquisition of this knowledge (Wolman and Page 2002). Peck (2011) describes the realm of policy transfer as being institutionally and socially constructed, including institutions and actors with favoured

channels and power relations where policy ideas, innovations, technologies, and models are shared. Policy transfer involves many different concepts and processes such as; innovation generation, innovation and knowledge uptake, lesson learning, research-policy-practice, policy adoption, policy adaptation, and expansion (Bissell *et al.* 2011). There are a number of different stages of policy transfer which include; the searching for an innovative policy or knowledge, the collecting of information, the assessment of collected information, conceptualization of implementing a policy, and lastly the adaptation and implementation of a policy.

To conceptualize policy transfer it is important to understand what is being transferred. Policy transfer involves 'policy', which can refer to "an individual item in a policy, or a programme, plan, strategy, tool, institutional or administrative arrangement, way of working, procedure, norm or principle" (Bissell *et al.* 2011, p. 1141). Policies are not the only thing that can be transferred, Dolowitz and Marsh (2000) identify objects of transfer to be; policy goals, policy content, policy instruments, policy programs, institutions, ideologies, ideas/attitudes, and lessons. This list is slightly changed from the list presented in Dolowitz and Marsh's earlier work (1996), with the main change being that the category of policy was divided into the four separate categories (policy goals, policy content, policy instruments, and policy programs). These are transferred in the form of information. For knowledge to be transferred, knowledge needs to be acquired, elaborated, implemented, and confirmed (Hjalager 2002). Information is affected and transferred by many infrastructures; individuals, institutions, organizations, and technologies (McCann 2011a). The quality of the information, which includes accuracy and scope, that is obtained by decision makers in policy is very important for the ability to assess the potential policy properly (Mossberger and Wolman 2003). Information that is required includes; goals, design, and specifics of the operations of the potential policy in use in other places (Mossberger and Wolman 2003). Multiple sources of information can help decrease the potential bias of the information being used (Mossberger and Wolman 2003). The most ideal information in potential policy assessment is formal evaluation research (Mossberger and Wolman 2003). However, this is often not available so criticisms and implementation problem information should be sought for as well as experts should be consulted (Mossberger and Wolman 2003). There can also be

barriers to the transfer of knowledge, which can be social, cultural, or institutional (Hjalager 2002).

The policy transfer process begins with policy decision makers searching for information and potential policies that are applicable to the policy problem they are facing. The initial learning about a policy, which occurs in the early stages of the policy transfer process, can occur not just within the regular job duties of transfer agents. Policies can be learnt about in countless ways and arenas such as from trips, vacations, the internet, attending conferences, etc. (Dolowitz 2003). Policy learning can occur in a more formal and focused way as well. Policy makers very often begin, when policy learning, to examine past policies from their own setting before examining policies elsewhere (Dolowitz and Marsh 1996). Past policies can become relevant again as circumstances in a particular setting change over time. Dolowitz and Marsh (1996) identify two types of sources of learning for policy makers, endogenous and exogenous. From these two sources Benson and Jordan (2011) observe that it is crucial for policy makers looking to innovate to first look to previous policies from their own context and their successes and failures, followed by examining policy innovations from other places (Benson and Jordan 2011). It is impossible for policy makers to be fully aware and knowledgeable of all possible policy solutions and therefore they must take a heuristic approach (Schneider and Ingram 1988). When searching for policies to transfer, the scope of the search tends to be narrow, because of limited time and resources, as well as bias, due to the individuals experiences, opinions, and perceptions of what would be appropriate (Dolowitz 2003; Graham *et al.* 2008). There is also a tendency by policy makers during their search to do so in a way that incurs the least search costs which often results in following the status quo rather than taking risks (Peck 2011). Policy makers cannot afford to search endlessly for the ideal policy solution for their problem and therefore make compromises when selecting new policies (Peck 2011).

For policy transfer to take place a policy must be identified as a desirable policy for transfer. Policies that are transferred are very often innovative, because innovative policies gain more attention than standard policies. Policies need attention by others that lead to information sharing and eventually policy transfer to occur. Innovative policies are very often created through the development of local practices and pilot schemes that are frequent at the local scale (Stone 1999). If a new, innovative policy is created and

does not receive any attention or recognition, it is likely that it will not be transferred to other locations or institutions.

Once decision makers have collected applicable policy information they must then decide which policies to utilize. During the decision making process, potential policies are evaluated by policy makers in a range of formal to informal ways (Mossberger and Wolman 2003). Formal approaches include designed experiments, simulations or modeling. Informal approaches include using reasoning from personal experience, expert opinions, or anecdotes. During policy decision making, potential policy solutions are supported and opposed by contesting the practicality, value, and transferability of a policy solution, to bias the outcome of the policy decision (Robertson 1991). The goals, means, and consequences of each potential policy solution are also weighed and the policy with the optimal balance of these three should be chosen (Robertson 1991). Policy lessons are often used in the policy decision process and are often perceived as "politically neutral truths" even though they are often used as "political weapons" (Robertson 1991). These lessons have been considered to have power in that they can bias policy choice (Robertson 1991).

When policy makers are determining whether to adopt a transferred policy, there are nearly always two arguments made either in support or in opposition to the introduction of the policy. When arguments are made to introduce (transfer) a policy, other locations' policies are used as evidence and looked to as "lessons" (lesson drawing) by promoters of change as a part of their argument to have an issue or policy placed on the political agenda (Stone 1999). In contradiction, negative lessons used by opponents to transfer highlight the risks and uniqueness of where the policy was developed to point out that emulation would ultimately fail (Robertson 1991). In this way policy lessons are used for both sides of the argument. Lesson drawing occurs in two phases; first there is the learning about a policy, and lastly there is the learning from the policy (Bissell *et al.* 2011). Learning from a policy involves taking away lessons as to what could be used from that policy in another location.

Mossberger and Wolman (2003) proposed assessment criteria for assessing a potential policy to be transferred to include: similarity of problems and goals, policy performance, and difference in setting. By assessing the similarity of the problems the

proposed policy has addressed in the past and the goals that the potential adopter is hoping to achieve, it is easier to avoid policy failure. Past policy performance must also be assessed to determine in what ways it was successful or unsuccessful. Differences in setting (including political, social, economic institutions, political culture, available resources, public opinion, and other policies) between where the potential policy has been implemented in the past and where the proposed policy is to be implemented are also important to identify so that adaptation to the policy can be made to tailor it to the new setting. Mossberger and Wolman (2003) suggest that in the policy transfer process, the most difficult dilemma is the assessment of the policy they are considering adopting. This area of policy transfer has been under-researched (Mossberger and Wolman 2003).

Some governments are viewed as leaders because of their wealth, size and cosmopolitan nature and are therefore more frequently tapped for policy ideas. This can lead to policies that are highly spread and implemented because they are 'fashionable' or a 'fad' (Mossberger and Wolman 2003). Unsuccessful policy transfer is more likely to occur if the transfer is unformed, incomplete or inappropriate (Dolowitz and Marsh 2000). It is important to note that recommended policies or strategies create a bounded search rather than a complete and comprehensive search (Mossberger and Wolman 2003).

Transfer Agents

There are many different agents of transfer involved in the policy transfer process that have been variably categorized by different authors (Dolowitz and Marsh 1996; Stone 1999). Stone (1999) identifies three main categories of agents of transfer; individuals, networks, and organisations. Dolowitz and Marsh (1996) outline six types of actors: elected officials; political parties; bureaucrats/civil servants; pressure groups; policy entrepreneurs/experts; and, supra-national institutions. In later work by Dolowitz and Marsh (2000) they extend this list to also include transnational corporations, think tanks, consultants, supra-national governmental and nongovernmental institutions. Additional to these actors, the media is also an important tool for sharing information in that it can inform developments, comparisons, and lesson drawing by the different agents of transfer (Stone 1999). At the international scale of diffusion, ideas also are promoted through think tanks, research institutes, and individual academic

entrepreneurs (Stone 1999). Pressure agencies and voluntary organisations also can play as actors involved in policy transfer (Stone 1999). It is important to note that all types of actors during policy transfer rarely act in a perfectly rational manner because of inherent biases that are present along with differing perceptions (Dolowitz and Marsh 2000).

Stone (1999) describes individuals as the first main agents of transfer. Individuals of transfer include more specifically; bureaucrats, politicians, and individuals within central government departments and agencies, local government, government task forces, Commissions of Inquiry, political parties, regional and international organisations (Benson and Jordan 2011; Stone 1999). Individuals travel through space and from past working connections and often pass along information that informally causes knowledge sharing and policy learning. McCann (2011a) identifies site visits and conference attendance with personal interactions as being the "crucial elements" to policy mobility. Individuals can also be change agents who hold a large amount of information about innovations and are able to get to target audiences (Rogers 2003). Change agents have been defined as "a public or private entity through which an innovation is distributed or made available to society at large" (Brown 1981, p. 50). This is in contrast to opinion leaders who are individuals that stand out because they receive more communication and tend to be more educated and experienced (Dabphet *et al.* 2012). It has been suggested by Dabphet *et al.* (2012), that these change agents and opinion leaders are the most important agents for innovation diffusion and implementation because of their influence, which is based on status and authority through both informal and interpersonal communication. Stone (1999) considers that networks are the second main agent of transfer. Information networks are import networks for transferring policy through the sharing of information (Wolman and Page 2002). Informal networks have been identified as particularly important in facilitating policy transfer (Wolman and Page 2002). However, the assessment of whether shared policy information is valid and of high quality has been recognized as having become more difficult due to the increase of available information (Wolman and Page 2002). Policy transfer networks also tend to be *ad hoc*, limited in size, and biased with the policy information shared within the network (Evans and Davis 1999). These networks however allow for access to knowledge resources and other networks that otherwise

would be inaccessible (Evans and Davis 1999). This can be observed on the internet where despite the large amount of available information there is a wide range of quality and reliability.

Stone (1999) considers organizations to be the third main agent of transfer. When governments or organizations search for and examine policy and governance information and examples, they have limited funds and time for elaborate searches (Wolman and Page 2002). Regional or local policy information is very often looked to by organizations because local policy can be easier to obtain and assess as well as more readily comparable to the searching government or organization (Wolman and Page 2002). Another reason for the focus on regional policy is because governments and organizations within the same region are frequently in competition for similar funds and therefore are more aware of what their regional competitors have in terms of innovations (Wolman and Page 2002). However while organizations may tend to focus on regional level information and policy, some organizations also look to and utilize international policy.

Policy entrepreneurs are another type of policy transfer agents and are "people who seek to initiate dynamic policy change" (Mintrom 1997, p. 739) and who are "political actors who promote policy ideas" (Mintrom 1997, p. 738). Policy entrepreneurs play important roles in promoting policy ideas, diffusion of innovation and setting of innovations on government agendas (Mintrom 1997; Mintrom and Vergari 1998). Policy entrepreneurs achieve this through partaking in problem identification, networking, shaping policy debate terms, and building coalitions (Mintrom 1997). By identifying problems, policy entrepreneurs are able to draw attention to the problem and indicate potential policy solutions to decision makers (Mintrom 1997). Building networks in policy circles is also important to policy entrepreneurs because these networks contain important contacts and give a level of credibility to the entrepreneur (Mintrom 1997). These networks of contacts also act as channels for sharing knowledge and sources of ideas (Dolowitz and Marsh 1996; Rose 1991). Not all policy innovations are implemented because of the efforts of policy entrepreneurs (Mintrom 1997). However, policy entrepreneurs do increase the likelihood of a policy innovation being considered and introduced (Mintrom 1997).

Policy makers are the actors in policy transfer that ultimately decide whether transfer should occur. Policy makers have two types of goals - political and policy (Graham *et al.* 2008). Political goals include re-election or reappointment, power control, and maintaining legitimacy (by adopting policies recommended by powerful leaders). Policy goals tend to be to adopt new policies and update old policy. Political makers rely on policy consultants to pass along information and advice that usually includes "best practices" from elsewhere (Dolowitz and Marsh 2000). The level of perceived urgency felt by decision makers and policy makers is related to the amount of time that is spent on investigation and analysis of considered policy solutions (Bennett 1991). Policy makers are limited by their capabilities or amount of policy control they have which can affect the diffusion of policies (Graham *et al.* 2008). Experts and policy makers are also restricted by the informational infrastructures that are used to transfer information about policies which include; organizations, institutions, and technologies (that frame knowledge) (McCann 2008). Policy makers have been idealized in the past as being completely rational, calculating, and involved in voluntaristic forms of policy learning and transfer (Peck and Theodore 2010; Peck 2011). However, in more recent literature this has been questioned and policy makers are more often recognized as less idealized and rational with the possibility of different levels of coercion being involved (Dolowitz and Marsh 1996; Peck 2011).

Communication plays a crucial role in the transfer of policy. Communication has been defined as "the process by which participants create and share information with each other in order to search for mutual advantage" (Rogers 1995, p. 5-6). In order for communication to occur there must be a sender, receiver, producer, and facilitator in order for information or knowledge to be transferred (Wolman and Page 2002). Examples of informal and formal forms of knowledge sharing (communicated information) include; government publications, good-practice guides, newsletters, presentations at seminars and conferences, electronic information (websites, emails, etc.), communication with researchers, academic journals, practitioner journals, study tours, and conversations with municipal officials (Wolman and Page 2002). Information in itself is neutral but the processing and interpretation of information is not (Wolman and Page 2002). Therefore it is in the processing and interpretation of knowledge where the transfer process is complicated and can lead to large variation. Communication and

transfer of ideas does not occur evenly and generally takes place most frequently and most effectively between similar individuals (Rogers 1995).

Motivations

Agents of transfer have different motivations and capacities. These motivations and capacities can range from adopting lessons that could be for a purpose that is symbolic or strategic for political support rather than the goal of improved understanding to increasing capacity towards learning (Stone 1999). Policy lessons are used both by opponents and supporters of policies and proposed policies (Dolowitz and Marsh 1996). This difference in motivations of political support and improved understanding creates two fairly distinct categories of policy learning and tactical or instrumental learning. Stone (1999) suggests that policy learning is more likely to result in "more coherent transfer of ideas, policies and practices" compared to tactical learning that may result in "*ad hoc* and piece-meal" policies (Stone 1999, p. 56). Inevitably all agents of transfer have certain motivations towards one of these two types of policy transfer to occur, policy learning versus tactical learning.

There is a tendency for organizations and individuals to avoid policy change unless there are certain pressures (such as a crisis or uncertainty) to motivate them. When there is a problem there is also a predisposition for policy makers to look abroad for solutions to their similar problem which tends to lead to policy transfer (Stone 1999). Policy adoption can occur as either an anticipatory or reactive approach to policy problems (Bennett 1991). There is a predisposition when a problem arises, to search for "ready-made solutions" for the problem from other jurisdictions (Rose 1993). Areas are more likely to look to transfer policy from countries or regions that are overall flourishing, as a part of an attempt to emulate the success.

Some agents proactively attempt to export or spread specific policy. This proactive exporting of policy can be promoted through the approach of 'best practice' in the form of programmes and policy (Stone 1999). The exporting of policies can be seen, particularly on the international scale, as a form of imperialism or neo-colonialism (Stone 1999). However, the exporting of policy can also be a positive process in that it more quickly diffuses the use of good policy, for example policy promoting sustainability.

Implementation and Adaptation

There are many issues and deterrents to introducing new policies or innovations. This is in part because the implementation of a policy innovation ultimately affects the social setting which results in a certain amount of risk, uncertainty, or hazard (Mohr 1969). The deterrents to the implementation of innovations include; cost, ideologies, fear of consequences, lack of information, narrow organizational goals, decision structures, and competence (Mohr 1969). The deterrent of costs of implementing an innovation can include time, skills, and materials. Fear by the individual and society of change can also be very powerful and affect support for implementation. These fears are related to traditions and social values (Mohr 1969). Enterprises vary, therefore some are more reluctant to utilize and implement new knowledge and others are not leading to early adopters of new policies or innovations, and later stage adopters that copy their colleagues.

Policy transfer is often followed by adaptations resulting in major divergence and differences between the original and emulated policy. The degree of transfer of a policy and the characteristics of that transfer are impacted by the structural factors of an institution (Stone 1999; Wolman and Page 2002). Also, within the implementation of policy, the process, and form of implementation as well as the specific tools and procedures at the local level can produce very different outcomes (Stone 1999). It has been said that "to adopt an innovation is to adapt it" (Akrich *et al.* 2002, p. 209). The level of adaptation of a policy, depending on the case, can directly relate to the level of success of a policy with higher levels of adaptations to the locality increasing the chances of success. Peck and Theodore (2001) acknowledge the tendency for policy adaptation to occur during policy transfer, as "the form and function of...policies is prone to change as they are translated and re-embedded within and between different institutional, economic and political contexts (at the local and national scales)" (Peck and Theodore 2001, p. 427). Policy adaptation in the policy transfer process is key to the success of a transferred policy due to the large variation in location specific factors that affect policy.

Types of Policy Transfer

Rose (1991) argues that policy transfer includes different degrees of transfer; copying, emulation, hybridization, inspiration, and synthesis (Rose 1991). Copying is the transfer of a policy to a new setting with no changes made to the policy. Emulation involves the copying of a policy with adaptations due to the circumstances of the setting. Hybridization is the combining of multiple (two or more) policies into one from different locations and scales (Stone 1999). Inspiration is the creation of a new policy based on new ideas created from experience and examining other policies. Synthesis is similar to hybridization and involves the combining of policies, ideas or programs. In later work Rose (2005) updated the degrees of policy transfer list into including; photocopying, copying, adaptation, hybrid, synthesis, disciplined inspiration, and selective imitation. Dolowitz and Marsh (2000) drew from Rose's (1993) continuum and identifies four degrees of policy transfer, from greatest to least; copying, emulation, combinations, and inspiration. Dolowitz and Marsh's (2000) list is similar to Rose's (1993) list except that it combines hybridisation and synthesis into one.

According to Hall (1993) there are three types of outputs that can occur from policy transfer; first order, second order, and third order. First order change are small adjustments to the 'status quo'. Second order change is more pronounced with policy instruments being changed which could involve new institutions being developed. Third order change is where the goals that direct policy are adjusted such as ideology, attitudes and concepts.

Policy transfer can also be categorized based on what is being transferred with two types; soft and hard (Evans and Davies 1999). Soft policy transfer is considered to involve ideas, attitudes, and concepts compared to hard policy transfer which involves programmes and implementation being transferred (Evans and Davies 1999). The rate of change can also be categorized into two types of policy change, incremental refinements to current policy and the introduction of completely new policy (Bennett and Howlett 1992).

Scale of Policy Transfer

Policy transfer can occur within and between the various scales; transnational, international, national, regional, and local (Evans and Davis 1999). Research has focused on policy transfer at the international and national scale resulting in a lack of research on local scale policy transfer (Bulkeley 2006; Dolowitz and Marsh 2000; Temenos and McCann 2011; Wolman and Page 2002). The importance of local scale has been noted in the literature that local level or "at the sub-national level: between states in federal systems and across local governments, municipalities and boroughs" are very important (Stone 1999, p. 53). Peck and Theodore (2010) state that, "all policies are local" in the sense that policies are inherently contextually specific with their impacts and characteristically grounded in their development and delivery (Peck and Theodore 2010). Local authorities are receivers, senders, and producers of information even though they are often overlooked (Wolman and Page 2002). The study by Wolman and Page (2002), found that local authorities do find it useful to seek information about other local authorities in order to prevent "reinventing the wheel" (Wolman and Page 2002). However, depending on the area, they found some local authorities felt that their area was unique in a way that made other local authorities experiences irrelevant to their own (Wolman and Page 2002). This result highlights, as mentioned earlier in this paper, the importance of adaptation in the policy transfer and learning processes. However, it is interesting to note that policy "may be practiced and implemented in incredibly different ways in various national settings" (Marsh and Sharman 2009, p. 279).

Research into policy transfer has shown that policy transfer can occur at both the vertical (across governance scales) and horizontal actor networks (across borders) (Benson and Jordan 2011). Policy making processes have become to stretch vertically (between institutions and domains) and horizontally (between national and local political entities) (Peck 2011). Policy transfer and learning are increasingly occurring at the international level as a part of the rise of globalization (Evans and Davies 1999; Stone 1999). Therefore it is reasonable to conclude policy transfer and learning are also likely increasing at the local level due to the increase in ease of communication through technology and influence of increased policy transfer and learning at the international level.

2.3.3. Policy Transfer Challenges

Policy transfer can be problematic because some policies or practices are not directly transferable into a different context or situation (Stone 1999). This can lead to the transferring of problematic policy and implementation problems, ultimately resulting in policy failure (Stone 1999). Success of a policy is considered by Dolowitz and Marsh (2000) to be "the extent to which policy transfer achieves the aims set by a government when they engaged in transfer, or is perceived as a success by the key actors involved in the policy area" (Dolowitz and Marsh 2000, p. 17). Dolowitz and Marsh (2000) identify three main categories of reasons for 'unsuccessful' policy transfer; uninformed transfer, incomplete transfer, and inappropriate transfer. Uninformed transfer occurs when not enough information is transferred with the policy. Incomplete transfer occurs when only part of a policy is transferred that is lacking crucial parts that made it successful. Inappropriate transfer is when transfer of a policy occurs that is inappropriate due to the differences in context (economic, social, political, or ideological).

Problematic transfer can occur when prevailing fashions occur which cloud the judgement of decision makers who may therefore jump to inappropriate or rushed policy transfer (Mossberger and Wolman 2003; Stone 1999). The need for a "quick fix", opportunism, selection bias, and misuse or interpretation of evaluation evidence can lead to premature or inappropriate policy transfer (Mossberger and Wolman 2003; Peck 2011). If a policy fails in one setting, this does not mean it will not be successful in another (Dolowitz 2003). Very often policy failure is due to challenges that arise from the social or political setting which make the policy inappropriate but only in that setting, and therefore the policy should not be written off by other settings (Dolowitz 2003). It can be useful to examine failed policies in order to discover what the issues were and whether if implemented somewhere else, how it could be adapted to be successful (Dolowitz 2003). Sometimes however, there can be a fundamental flaw in the policy that cannot be corrected through adaptation (Dolowitz 2003). Policy transfer failure can also be caused because there are inevitably various interests involved in a policy that are always served differently leading to certain interests being favoured over others (McCann 2011a).

To avoid inappropriate policy transfer, decision makers should gather adequate evidence from policy lessons in order to make appropriate comparisons and evaluate the

situation (Stone 1999). Stone (1999) has identified comparative analysis as being a useful approach for decision makers to identify "domestic circumstances or structures that aid effective policy transfer" (Stone 1999, p. 54). As outlined by Mossberger and Wolman (2003), in cases where there are high levels of uncertainty concerning the differences and also limited knowledge of how to adapt the policy to the proposed setting, then implementation should be, if possible, incremental (Mossberger and Wolman 2003). Policy failures are important to examine because they can hold important policy lessons and trigger redesign or reconsideration of certain policies (May 1992; Mossberger and Wolman 2003).

There are a number of constraints that can be problematic for successful policy transfer to occur. Dolowitz and Marsh (1996) identified path dependency, structural and institutional impediments, ideological incompatibility, and lack of resource availability (technological, political, economic, and bureaucratic) for implementation (Benson and Jordan 2011). Evans (2009) also identified constraints to policy transfer at the different stages of transfer such as with 'cognitive' obstacles during the pre-decision phase, 'environmental' obstacles during the implementation phase, and public opinion. Benson and Jordan (2011) state that there are four main types of constraints to policy transfer; demand side, programmatic, contextual, and application related. The demand side refers to issues of policy makers being motivated to simply follow the status quo rather than go beyond it unless there is a large policy failure or global economic crisis (Benson and Jordan 2011; Stone 1999). Programmatic constraints refer to a policy's specific characteristics that make it inherently more easily introduced. Contextual constraints encompass factors such as the historical background, level of path dependency, political context, institutional structure density, and level of cultural and ideological compatibility (Benson and Jordan 2011). Application restraints include issues around the implementation of a policy such as transaction costs, and scale of change required. It is helpful to understand the different types of constraints that affect policy transfer because these constraints can be eliminated or used tactically by policy makers.

2.4. Discussion of Literature

Innovation and policy transfer are extensively discussed in the literature. However, the linkages between the two bodies of research are not widely recognized. Both policy transfer and innovation are important concepts. Innovation plays a significant role in development and change over time. Policy transfer is a critical process in the dissemination of knowledge across space and time. The two sets of literature on innovation and policy transfer have had very different foci which explains why they are usually studied separately.

The focus of most of the research on innovation is within distinct sectors such as technology and manufacturing (Nordin 2003). Thus far research in some sectors, particularly in tourism, has been fragmented and sparse (Kvam and Straete 2010). This is in part due to the lack of a clear definition and agreement over the ways in which to measure innovation (Hall 2009; Hjalager 2010). Work is gradually being conducted to fill in these gaps and create theory and empirical evidence (Hjalager 2010). The key areas that have been identified as lacking in the literature of innovation are; foundations, processes, implications, driving forces behind innovation, and policies of innovation (Hjalager 2010). Innovation has been studied extensively in some areas but only recently has it been investigated in the context of tourism (Kvam and Straete 2010; Schumpeter 1934).

Policy transfer research has focussed on the national and international scale. The limited work at the local scale was noted several times in the literature (Bulkeley 2006; Dolowitz and Marsh 2000; McCann 2011a; Temenos and McCann 2011; Wolman and Page 2002). Research on policy transfer at the local scale, is important, and is an area that deserves more intense study. Most commonly the case studies are of entire countries (Marsh and Sharman 2009). Policy transfer studies also tend to use qualitative methods and conduct detailed analyses of a small number of case studies (usually only two or more) (Marsh and Sharman 2009).

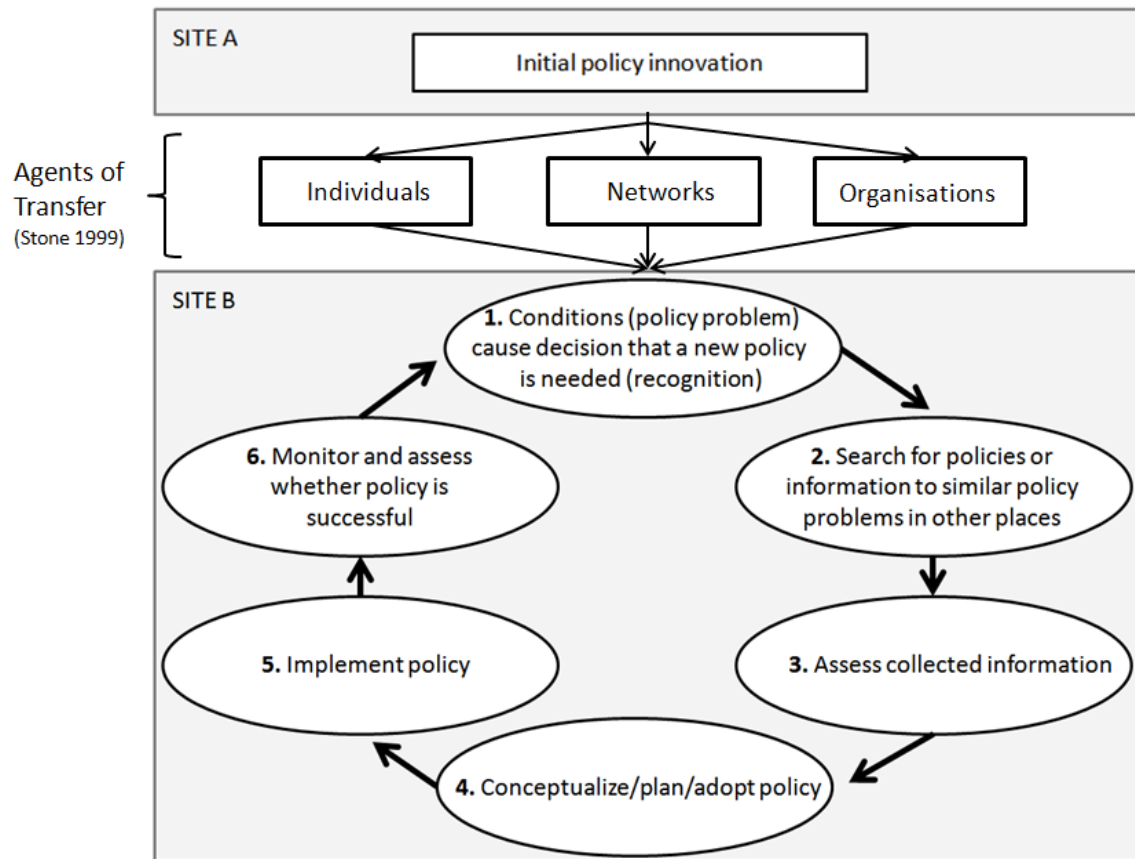


Figure 2.1. A conceptual model of the policy transfer cycle

The innovation and policy transfer literature is linked, as a framework for the current study, through the creation of a conceptual model of the policy cycle (Figure 2.1). Site A is where an initial policy innovation is created and transferred from through a transfer agent. A transfer agent can either be, as outlined by Stone (1999), an individual, network, or organisation. The conceptual circular policy cycle in Site B begins with a problem that results in decision makers realizing a new or adapted original policy innovation from Site A is needed (1) (Hjalager 2010; Macchiavelli 2009). This recognition triggers a policy and information search around solutions to similar problems in other places (2) (Benson and Jordan 2011; Dolowitz 2003; Peck 2011; Rose 2009). Once information is collected it is assessed (3) (Mossberger and Wolman 2003; Robertson 1991). From this assessed information a new policy is conceptualized and planned (4) (Stone 1999). This leads to the implementation of the planned policy (5) (Akrick *et al.* 2002; Peck and Theodore 2001; Stone 1999; Wolman and Page 2002). The newly

implemented policy is then monitored and assessed to determine whether it is successful at solving the original problem (6) (Rose 2009). If the policy is unsuccessful, or requires modification, the cycle can be restarted. It is important to note that this cycle can be interrupted or not fulfilled. It is also a continuous process that occurs around many different policy problems at the same time.

This study aims to link the concepts of innovation and policy transfer. It is framed in part through the use of the model (Figure 2.1) derived from the literature review. The focus of this research is on the local level in order to contribute to the limited work on policy transfer that currently exists at this scale (Bulkeley 2006; Dolowitz and Marsh 2000; Temenos and McCann 2011; Wolman and Page 2002). This study applies these concepts to case studies in resort settings - another area of research that is lacking in the literature (Hjalager 2006; Kvam and Straete 2010).

3. Case Study and Methods

3.1. Chapter Organization

This chapter outlines the methods used to examine policy transfer and innovation with respect to moving towards sustainable futures in resort destinations. The methods employ a case study approach that is primarily qualitative with data derived from the analysis of official documents and key informant interviews.

The chapter begins with an overview of the study's objectives and guiding questions. The justification behind the case study selection is then explained. Next, the methods that were employed for both the document analyses and the key informant interviews are presented. This is followed by a description of the context in which the innovative approaches to governance towards a sustainable future have evolved in Whistler. This includes a description of the development of the Resort Municipality of Whistler (RMOW), the role of The Natural Step (TNS), and the Whistler Centre for Sustainability (WCS). The last part of the chapter presents an overview of the socio-economic characteristics of the five resort municipalities in British Columbia that have adopted aspects of Whistler's new governance approaches towards a sustainable future (Fernie, Harrison Hot Springs, Invermere, Kimberley, and Osoyoos). A more detailed description of Harrison Hot Springs is presented as it was selected for more in-depth analysis. Lastly the limitations of the methods are discussed.

3.2. Study Objectives and Guide

The objective of this study is to examine the policy transfer of innovative sustainability principles and practices towards sustainable futures in resort settings. To reach this objective, this study firstly investigates the way in which Whistler's innovative governance approach developed. Secondly this study examines whether Whistler's

governance approach was flexible in its transfer to other resort municipalities in British Columbia.

Study questions that help operationalize the overall objective research questions are categorized into two sections below:

Whistler

- How innovative is the Whistler Model?
- What makes the Whistler Model transferable to other places?
- What is the role of the Whistler Centre for Sustainability (WCS) in creating and disseminating the Whistler Model?
- What was the rationale behind creating the WCS?
- What is the role of the WCS in creating and disseminating the Whistler Model?
- Why and to what extent has the Whistler Model gone 'off the track'?

Harrison Hot Springs

- What were the previous sustainability plans or moves towards sustainability before working with the WCS to develop the Integrated Community Sustainability Plan (ICSP)?
- Why and how did it come about that Harrison worked with the WCS to develop their ICSP?
- How successful has the ICSP been for moving towards sustainability? What were the short term and long term impacts to Harrison Hot Springs? Were these consequences desirable or undesirable? Direct or indirect? Anticipated or unanticipated?
- What new policy or Official Community Plan (OCP) adaptations have resulted from the ICSP?

This study was guided by the conceptual model of the policy transfer cycle (Figure 2.1) developed for this research based on an integration of the innovation and policy transfer literature. The policy transfer cycle is later applied to the case studies based on the results of the interviews and document analysis.

3.3. Case Study Selection

A case study approach was used for this study. The case study approach is frequently used and is highly effective in policy transfer and mobility research (Marsh and Sharman 2009; McCann 2011a). Policy transfer studies tend to use qualitative methods to conduct detailed analyses focused on a small number of case studies (as few as two) because they are in depth (Marsh and Sharman 2009).

Whistler was chosen as the focus of this study because it was the first established resort municipality (in 1975) in British Columbia and has become a widely recognized innovative leader (Gill and Williams 2011). Whistler has been particularly innovative in its development of policy and governance towards sustainability within a resort setting. Of the 13 recently established resort municipalities in British Columbia, six of them are working with the Whistler Centre for Sustainability (WCS) (City of Fernie, City of Kimberley, District of Invermere, Town of Osoyoos, Village of Harrison Hot Springs, and District of Ucluelet), (Table 3.1). Five of these were selected to be included in this study because of their close relationship/partnership with Whistler through the WCS. The District of Ucluelet was not examined because the project that was undertaken with the WCS was smaller and more specific (GHG-related Official Community Plan Amendment) than with the other resort municipalities. The second component of this study involved key informant interviews in Whistler and Harrison Hot Springs. In depth, primary data collection was limited to two resort municipalities largely due to time constraints. Whistler was chosen because of its role and reputation in developing the innovative Integrated Comprehensive Sustainability Plan (ICSP), often referred to as the “Whistler Model”, and subsequently transferring a version of this model to other resorts in British Columbia. Harrison Hot Springs was chosen from amongst those resort communities working with the WCS because of its greater dependence on tourism.

Table 3.1. Relationship of new resort municipalities with the Whistler Centre for Sustainability (WCS)

Working with the WCS	Not working with the WCS
City of Fernie	Town of Golden
Village of Harrison Hot Springs	Village of Radium Hot Springs
District of Invermere	City of Revelstoke
City of Kimberley	City of Rossland
Town of Osoyoos	Sun Peaks Mountain Resort Municipality
District of Ucluelet	District of Tofino
	Village of Valemount

3.4. Data Collection

The two methods of data collection are explained in this section: secondary data analysis of official documents; and, key informant interviews. Selected official document analysis was used in the initial stage of data collection because many of the resort municipalities had created similar official documents that could easily be compared. These official documents relate to governance and policy being generated and diffused in the case study areas. Key informant interviews were also selected for this study to add depth, enrich, explore causal factors and add quality data (Marshall 1996). Qualitative interviews also provide detail and reasoning that is not included in official documents.

3.4.1. Review of Official Documents

Secondary data were derived from the Integrated Community Sustainability Plan (ICSP) documents. The ICSPs were selected as the official documents for analyses because they relate to governance and policy generation and diffusion both within and to the case study resort municipalities. The ICSPs are also the direct product of the relationship and work between the resort municipalities and Whistler through the WCS. Therefore the ICSP product gives insights into how and what has diffused between the WCS and the resort municipality. These official documents were available over the

internet because they are recently published (2011) and are designed to be accessible to the public. This official document analysis offered a range of standard information for each of the six case study communities and provided a comparative descriptive data base upon which the in-depth key informant interviews in Whistler and Harrison Hot Springs were able to elaborate with respect to process issues and causal relationships.

The ICSPs were compared for Osoyoos, Kimberley, Invermere, Harrison Hot Springs, and Fernie. Using the organizational structure of the ICSPs each section of the ICSPs were compared. This included information on: participants, vision, targets, strategy areas, initial recommended actions, indicators and monitoring, and next steps. Each of these sections was analyzed separately. Methods for the strategy areas, initial recommended actions, indicators and monitoring sections were analyzed using a comparative approach involving counts of topics or terms. The remaining targets, participants, vision, and future actions sections were analyzed through general observations. For all sections of the ICSP analysis similarities and differences were identified.

3.4.2. *Qualitative Key Informant Interviews*

Semi-structured interviews were selected for this study because of their flexible nature and the type of information that needed to be collected. Ethics approval from the Simon Fraser University Office of Research Ethics was obtained prior to conducting any interviews. All participation in interviews was voluntary and key informants were given the opportunity to review quotes from the transcriptions from the interviews. The interviews were designed to collect information on the main themes interlinked to the key research questions. A list of key questions was created in advance and was designed to be flexible. This provided the opportunity to be open to unplanned subsequent questions that arose based on responses from the interviews. These unplanned questions allowed for more depth and detail to information already given.

An interview protocol (Appendix 2) was created to address the key research questions. This was then used as a flexible guide during interviews to facilitate conversation. A different selection of questions was asked depending on the key informant interviewees involvement and knowledge base. Whistler interviewees were

asked a selection of questions from the RMOW and WCS sections of the interview protocol. Harrison Hot Springs interviewees were all asked every questions under the Harrison Hot Springs section of the protocol.

Seven key informant interviews were conducted in Whistler and five in Harrison Hot Springs. The author of this study conducted all interviews in January and February, 2013. Key informants were identified based on their role in the community, willingness, accountability, and knowledge related to the research questions of this study (Marshall 1996). Key informants were contacted by email about the study and to ask whether they would be interested in participating as an interviewee. Participants were past and present municipal elected and unelected officials and staff (7), board members of the WCS (2), and resident participants from the ICSP process for Whistler and Harrison Hot Springs. All participants were in some way involved in at least one of the following: the development of *Whistler2020*; the creation of the Whistler Centre for Sustainability; the ICSP Quick Start process; or, the current workings of the municipality with respect to the *Whistler2020* or ICSP. All 12 interviews were conducted in person. Interviews lasted 20 to 60 minutes and informants responded to all questions. Interviews were recorded with consent of participants and transcribed at a later time. Participants were kept anonymous by assigning coded file names for the recorded interview files. Quotes were selected from the transcription and organized based on topics and themes between the interviewees transcriptions. These quotations were then emailed to their respective respondent to give them the opportunity to make changes. Six of the twelve respondents chose to respond with alterations to their quotations. These alterations tended to be minor rewording and did not change the meaning of the quotations.

3.5. Study Sites

3.5.1. Whistler

Whistler was established as the Resort Municipality of Whistler (RMOW) in 1975, the first resort municipality in British Columbia. The RMOW was meant to serve as a prototype with the purpose of better facilitating tourism development at the municipal level. Whistler was chosen to be a prototype because there were few people and little

industry previously in the area. This meant that Whistler could be built with its sole industry and purpose as a ski resort destination without having to conform to historic development or infrastructure. The *Resort Municipality of Whistler Act* gave six specific powers and tools to the municipality of Whistler that are not included in the *Local Government Act* (1996) that governs other British Columbia municipalities (BC Ministry of Community Services 2006). First, the *Resort Municipality of Whistler Act* gave Whistler closer provincial supervision so that the province could more quickly aid the community when necessary. Second, the Act allowed less stringent referendum requirements by allowing longer-term borrowing for construction of facilities to support development without the need to seek a referendum of approval by residents. Third, the Act broadened “development cost charges” by allowing the municipality to charge a larger development cost charge to developers. Normally municipalities are allowed to only charge developers the cost of constructing road, sewer, water, and drainage infrastructure and acquisition costs to support the new development. However, additional costs were permitted under the Act, such as the cost to provide the required additional affordable housing for resort staff resulting from the development of Whistler (BC Ministry of Community Services 2006). Fourth, the Act broadened the development permit powers of the municipality. This includes enhanced control over architectural theme, style, and functional connection to other structures to ensure a uniform high quality physical environment. Fifth, the Act allowed for the creation of a resort business association which is a "legal entity with a built-in taxation system whose purpose is to promote the collective economic interests of a community through effective marketing and promotional programs" (BC Ministry of Community Services 2006, p. 2). Sixth, the Act permitted the resort business association to create a built-in collection system for mandatory fees for community services. This Act has been credited with being one of the key elements that led Whistler to become the world class successful ski resort that it continues to be today (BC Ministry of Community Services 2006).

Whistler developed as a comprehensively planned resort in part made possible by the additional powers given to Whistler by the *Resort Municipality of Whistler Act*. In 1975 there were less than 1,000 residents in the Whistler area (Whistler 2011). Development quickly followed and what is now the center of the Whistler (the Village, Blackcomb Mountain, and the north face of Whistler Mountain) was first built and opened

for business in 1980 (Whistler 2011). Whistler was originally planned by a consulting team including Eldon Beck who was an important architect in the famous Vail Village design in Colorado (Whistler 2011). The design was centered on a vision of a dense, car-free town centre with streets that meandered and always kept a view of the mountains. Whistler quickly grew from its original development in 1980 and only nine years later became one of the top ranked mountain destinations in the world (Whistler 2011). The population of Whistler has also drastically grown to a population of 10,531 residents in 2011 (*Whistler2020* 2011).

In 2000, Whistler was the first resort community in North America to adopt The Natural Step (TNS) framework for sustainable development, which was considered a best practice model (*Whistler2020* 2011). This adoption of TNS was a major part of the development of a more sustainable governance model (corporatist approach) that occurred when Whistler encountered a crisis point upon reaching its growth limit capacity (Gill and Williams 2011). TNS is a non-profit organization created in 1989 by oncologist Karl-Henrik Robèrt in Sweden. It is a globally recognized brand that is made up of partners and non-profit organizations. There are offices, projects, and associates for TNS in 18 countries (*The Natural Step* n.d.). TNS coordinates and supports a global network of researchers, practitioners, and champions that are "all using a shared strategic approach to sustainability; and, widely promotes and disseminates the Framework for Strategic Sustainable Development and related educational tools and resources" (*The Natural Step* n.d.). Sustainability expertise and innovations for solutions are spread through the use of education, dialogue, coaching, and advice. Licenses are issued to organizations and communities by TNS to work with them and use their framework for sustainability. These licenses must be purchased so that a company or group can use the TNS model and be shown how to use it. Corporate and community licenses have been granted to over 600 communities in Sweden alone and an increasing number worldwide (*The Natural Step* n.d.). Within each community "early adopters" are identified and the ideas are expected to spread through the community. A vision is created for/by the community/organization and then a plan is created to achieve the vision. The sustainability principles on which TNS is based are shown below in Table 3.2. The literature on TNS is primarily produced by proponents of TNS and therefore it is difficult to obtain an unbiased perspective.

Table 3.2. List of The Natural Step Sustainability (TNS) Principles

The Natural Step Sustainability Principles	
1.	Reduce and minimize contributions to the systematic accumulation of materials from the earth's crust.
2.	Reduce and eliminate contributions to the systematic accumulation of substances produced by society.
3.	Reduce and eliminate contributions to the ongoing physical degradation of nature.
4.	Reduce and eliminate the contributions to conditions that systematically undermine people's ability to meet their basic needs.

Source: *The Natural Step*, n.d.

The concept of using TNS was brought about by Karl-Henrik Robèrt's visit to Whistler on a holiday in 2000. Whistler had been forward-looking and proactive around the environment in the past and was seeking for a way to engage more broadly in sustainability issues. This meant that when Karl-Henrik Robèrt discussed TNS through a few talks around Whistler the idea "caught on" (*Whistler2020* 2011). Whistler had the political as well as the financial and human resources to engage in the TNS program. Whistler entered the Early Adopter program with participation from: the Resort Municipality of Whistler (RMOW); Whistler Blackcomb (the mountain operators); the Fairmont Chateau Whistler Hotel; Tourism Whistler (resort marketing agency); One-hour Photo (local business), and the Association of Whistler Area Residents for the Environment (an environmental NGO). The early adopters launched the "Whistler: It's our Nature" program that involved: a trainer program; a community symposium on sustainability; a speaker series; and, a sustainability toolkit (for households, schools, and businesses). Each early adopter created their own sustainability programs within their organizations. This led to the community deciding to partake in developing a comprehensive and long-term vision, plan and process, focused around sustainability. This program was called "Whistler: It's our Future" and this program resulted in the development of the *Whistler2020*, the first Integrated Community Sustainability Plan (ICSP).

Whistler2020 was created in 2004 after two years of community consultation. It was the first comprehensive sustainability plan in North America. It was also the first

plan to use the TNS framework for all levels of development and implementation. *Whistler2020* is the highest-level policy document and has become an innovative model that people are beginning to refer to as the “Whistler Model” (Gill 2011). Its vision is that, “Whistler will be the premier mountain resort community - as we move toward sustainability” (Resort Municipality of Whistler 2007, p. 21). The strategies towards sustainability were organized around community priorities of: enriching community life, enhancing the resort experience, protecting the environment, ensuring economic viability, and partnering for success. Sixteen multi-stakeholder community task forces were established to develop and implement action programs for each strategy area as a part of the move towards sustainability. The Whistler Centre for Sustainability (WCS), funded through the municipality, ran this process.

WCS is a non-profit, mission-based consulting organization created by the RMOW. The WCS is held at arm’s length from RMOW and is a separate entity. They work with local governments to share learning’s between them and create more sustainable and successful communities. WCS facilitates community sustainability planning and implementation processes, as well as strategies and implementation of corporate and community energy emission plans. They provide a variety of services including; capacity building workshops and training (for municipal staff), developing ICSPs, and embedding the communities’ goals into decision-making and implementation. The WCS also has the role of administrator for community collaboration, monitoring, and reporting for the *Whistler2020*.

The mandate of the WCS is “to lead communities and tourism toward a sustainable future” (Whistler Centre for Sustainability 2011d, p. 1). It is a part of the WCS's mandate “to continue to lead Whistler's sustainability initiatives, to share learnings from Whistler with other communities, and to bring learning from other communities back to Whistler” (Whistler Centre for Sustainability 2011d, p. 1). The WCS is responsible for the development of the *Whistler2020* and community sustainability plan. They are also in charge of implementation as well as annual reporting and monitoring of Whistler’s progress. The WCS also works with and provides assistance for many organizations and local governments in British Columbia and Canada to aid with the development and implementation of ICSPs, Official Community Plans, community energy baselines, and carbon neutral plans. The WCS is led by an executive director

and governed by a board of directors. Funding comes from the fee-for-service assistance with local governments along with project-specific grant funding. The WCS approach is geared towards strategic success for sustainability and prides itself in being flexible and scalable so that it can be applied to any situation and client.

3.5.2. Harrison Hot Springs

The Village of Harrison Hot Springs is situated in the Fraser Valley, on the sandy shores of Harrison Lake, surrounded by mountains. The village was named after the local hot springs located on the shores of Harrison Lake. The original Bath House and St. Alice Hotel was built in 1886 (*Harrison Hot Springs Resort & Spa* 2012). The St. Alice Hotel burnt down in 1920 and in 1925 replaced by what is now the main building for the Harrison Hot Springs Resort and Spa (*Harrison Hot Springs Resort & Spa* 2012). It was the first 'resort' style destination in southwestern British Columbia and was very successful (*Harrison Hot Springs Resort & Spa* 2012). Guests traveled by riverboat or train from the Pacific coast to enjoy the resort and hot springs (*Harrison Hot Springs Resort & Spa* 2012). The Harrison Hot Springs Resort and Spa expanded in the 1950s and 1960s with additional hotel rooms and dining room (*Harrison Hot Springs Resort & Spa* 2012). Two indoor and three outdoor mineral pools were completed in 1988 (*Harrison Hot Springs Resort & Spa* 2012). The hotel is the main attraction in Harrison Hot Springs and most of the other businesses rely on the visitors that are brought in by the hotel. This has resulted in the village of Harrison Hot Springs growing around the hotel. There is no industry located on Harrison Lake.

The resident population of Harrison Hot Springs is approximately 1,573 with a large proportion of the population being retirees (*Super, Natural British Columbia* n.d.). Harrison Hot Springs is primarily a summer destination with a range of tourist activities available including; the hot springs, canoeing, sailing, boating, fishing, beach activities, and hiking. It is also well known for the Festival of the Arts that takes places each summer.

3.5.3. Other British Columbia Resort Municipalities

The *Mountain Resort Association Act* was enacted in 1996 by the Province of British Columbia. This Act was based on the *Resort Municipality of Whistler Act* because of its contribution to the great overall success of Whistler. The *Mountain Resort Association Act* gives the same powers and tools given to Whistler by the *Resort Municipality of Whistler Act* to other resort destinations. In order to be incorporated under the *Mountain Resort Association Act* a municipality must qualify based on its potential for tourism development and then apply to be incorporated under the Act (BC Ministry of Community Services 2006). There are 13 resort municipalities incorporated under the *Mountain Resort Association Act* (RuralBC 2012).

Table 3.3. Comparison of case study resort municipalities in British Columbia

Resort Municipality	Population	Tourism Season	Type of Tourist Destination	Other Industry
City of Fernie	5,000 (City of Fernie 2006)	All season	-Ski Resort -Recreation Destination	-Mining -Forestry
Village of Harrison Hot Springs	1,573 (<i>Super, Natural British Columbia</i> n.d.)	Summer	-Hot Spring Resort	-None
District of Invermere	3,000 (<i>District of Invermere</i> n.d.)	Summer	-Recreation Destination	-Timber -Mining -Agriculture
City of Kimberley	6,000 (<i>Super, Natural British Columbia</i> 2013)	Winter	-Ski Resort -Recreation Destination	-Mining
Town of Osoyoos	5,000 (<i>Osoyoos</i> 2008)	Summer	-Recreation Destination -Enotourism	-Agriculture
Resort Municipality of Whistler	10,531 (<i>Whistler2020</i> 2011)	All Season	-Ski Resort -Recreation Destination	-None

The characteristics of the resort municipalities of British Columbia vary largely. The table (Table 3.3) outlines these basic characteristics for the six of the resort municipalities examined later in this study. Whistler has the largest population along with being one of the few, along with Harrison Hot Springs that have no other major industry other than tourism. The City of Fernie and Whistler are the only two who are all season

destinations. The type of tourist destination varies, however, the resort municipalities tend to be centered on outdoor recreation such as skiing, snowboarding, golfing, hiking, etc. except Harrison Hot Springs. Although the characteristics between the resort municipalities vary, they share many similarities particularly because they have the same special legislative powers given to them by the *Mountain Resort Association Act*.

3.6. Study Limitations

There are several limitations due to the nature and type of this study. Firstly, at a broad scale this study is limited by its size and scope because it is only examining certain types of municipalities (resort municipalities) and within a unique geographical context (British Columbia) who are working with the Whistler Centre for Sustainability (WCS). There is also a temporal restraint since the study focuses only on the fairly recent events and information since 2000. There were also limitations to the type of data that was collected and the analysis that was used. The document analysis was limited by the examination of only one document type, the Integrated Community Sustainability Plan (ICSP), generated through the partnership between the respective resort municipality and the WCS. Also, the official documents do not necessarily reflect what is happening on the ground. There is always the possibility that the number of key informants that were interviewed was too small to gather all the required information and may not represent the views of the majority of the community (Marshall 1996). Key informants interviewed from Whistler and Harrison Hot Springs inevitably had varying amounts of experience and knowledge. Most of the questions asked during interviews were about past events (*Whistler2020* or the ICSP in Harrison Hot Springs) and therefore people's memories and opinions change over time. Therefore opinions expressed in the interviews would have possibly been different if interviews had taken place during or immediately after the creation of the *Whistler2020* or ICSP in Harrison Hot Springs. I also did not conduct follow up interviews for further discussion or clarification. Additionally, with this type of study there is always the potential of misinterpretation of interviews and official documents. The more in depth analysis in this study only applies to two of the resort municipalities. Although these study limitations are present, the results of this study offer valuable insights into policy innovation and mobility.

4. Results: Policy Innovation and Transfer

The results for this study begin with a brief overview of the Whistler Model in order to understand the nature of the policy that was transferred. This overview first describes how Whistler's innovative governance approach developed. Then the process and outcomes of transferring the Whistler Model are examined in detail. More specifically the transfer of the Whistler Model to the five resort municipality case studies in British Columbia, with a more in-depth examination of the Harrison Hot Springs is presented.

4.1. Innovation: The Whistler Model

To examine how Whistler's governance approach developed into the Whistler Model, the *Whistler2020* document was examined and then seven key informant interviews were conducted in Whistler. This innovative governance approach is based on *Whistler2020*, the highest-level, municipal policy document. The Whistler Model is grounded in The Natural Step principles and includes a combination of embedded sustainability principles, long-term envisioning and planning, high involvement of stakeholders, indicators, and monitoring system. Quotations from the interviews conducted for this study were organized into four main categories; policy creation, Whistler Model characteristics, Whistler Centre for Sustainability (creation, role and purpose, and Quick Start process), and changes over time. The sections below are organized into these four categories and summarize the results from these interviews.

4.1.1. Policy Creation

In response to the question "*How did the Whistler Model come about (circumstances and motivations) and what were the influences?*" all respondents gave similar descriptions. These descriptions focused on the point in time (around 2000) when

The Natural Step (TNS) framework was adopted in Whistler. This time was perceived as the critical turning point where the creator of TNS framework, Dr. Karl-Henrik Robèrt, visited Whistler. One respondent summarized the story as:

...circumstances come back to serendipity - that Dr. Karl-Henrik Robèrt was in town snowboarding with his son was a big piece of how we ended up with TNS. It wasn't like we were doing a perfect review of literature all across the planet for a sustainability framework and this one arose to the top based on a competitive process. We were ripe for someone to bring that kind of thinking to the community. But we didn't invite him here. Once he was here someone invited him to give a presentation, which was extraordinary and particularly good at conveying the importance of sustainability to the business community. That was the crux move in getting the community to engage in it.
(W6)

A common characteristic of this time during the adoption of TNS in Whistler was the high level of excitement felt by the community of Whistler. The reasoning behind Whistler being open to TNS framework and subsequent development of the Whistler Model was described by one respondent as being due to Whistler's reliance on cold weather stability that could be threatened by climate change. This respondent also stated that this climate dependency for Whistler residents meant that sustainability "connects at a level that isn't just rationale, it is passionate" (W1). Another respondent mentioned the high level of passion felt in Whistler and how, "we had the right blend of people that were passionate about moving this [TNS] on and the value and leverage and differentiation we could set Whistler aside from other potential competitors at the same time" (W7). A number of the respondents also described that even though there was a high level of excitement and passion in Whistler that there was also resistance although small, mainly relating to cost of pursuing the *Whistler2020* that was overcome.

4.1.2. Whistler Model Characteristics

Whistler key informants gave a range of answer to the question of: *What is the Whistler Model and what makes it innovative, unique, and scalable?*

The two characteristics of the Whistler Model most emphasized in the interviews were the high level of engagement of the community and the in-depth monitoring system. This combination was described by one respondent as:

...cross-sector engagement, it included all of the community. And then the continuous feedback loops getting feedback on how we are doing. So are we progressing towards our goal or not and that comes through measurement and also feedback from that cross-sector group of people. So I would say different groups of people and regular feedback would be the two things that stick out the most to me. (W6)

The high level of engagement was described as occurring because the Whistler Model was designed for and invited engagement. An issue with this engagement eventually led to what one respondent described as, “an unfortunate reality that people get tired of things and you do end up with some engagement fatigue” (W1). Engagement fatigue was felt to have occurred with the two year *Whistler2020* process and expressed in the results of the recent municipal election (2011) in the Resort Municipality of Whistler (RMOW) when newly elected officials exhibited a shift in the resort municipality priorities. The shift in priorities were away from sustainability and community engagement towards a focus on economic prosperity and development. However, even with political changes the commitment to a comprehensive monitoring program has continued. The monitoring program is a part of *Whistler2020* and involves tracking the status and progress of Whistler towards the vision outlined in *Whistler2020* through the use of indicators. The reporting system for the indicators is used to inform decision makers and the general community. Monitoring was identified by all respondents as essential. As one respondent stated, “this data is so important to the way we [RMOW] make decisions” (W1) noting further that monitoring is “becoming increasingly cemented in the way we manage and govern the community” (W1).

Other characteristics of the Whistler Model respondents mentioned included: the high level of embeddedness of the *Whistler2020* into the decision making process; advantages of the shared language from TNS for communicating to the community; and, its long term vision approach. Some specific characteristics of TNS applied to the Whistler Model were also identified, including the “science-based approach to sustainability” (W2) and “back casting from sustainability principles” (W2). However; as one respondent observed:

...it depends on how you define TNS model. The Framework for Strategic Sustainable Development has five levels, they talk about back casting from principles, they talk about strategic guidelines, they talk about the actions level they talk about ABCD. All that stuff. That

was used in Whistler but so much more was also used in Whistler in terms of engaging people and in terms of walking people through processes, in terms of community relations, in terms of just creating relationships between people in the community. (W2)

In particular what was described as unique in Whistler was the combination and timing by being the first in using the TNS framework in the in-depth way that they did. One respondent described the distinctiveness of Whistler's engagement with TNS as follows:

...I think the thing that was unique was the combination in Whistler. The combination of using the framework for strategic sustainable development [otherwise known as the TNS framework] and extensive community engagement. It was the first municipality in North America to use it in a comprehensive way and it did... But Whistler also used Scenario Based Planning... envision sustainability tools based on the Quest Model. (W2)

Another characteristic identified by one respondent as setting the Whistler Model apart from TNS was that, "where the Whistler Centre for Sustainability has a bit of an edge (from TNS), they're a group that hasn't just worked in the development of a plan but has also been responsible for the implementation of a plan and monitoring of a plan" (W5).

All respondents felt the Whistler Model was scalable and transferable because as one respondent characterized it, "it gets to the basics that are generic and at the same time it is flexible enough" (W2). The basics were described to be sustainability, public engagement, comprehensive plans, monitoring system and metrics, as well as long-term vision and goals. It was also described by another respondent to be due to the "methodology and its approach" (W5) and that Whistler stands as a working model which makes it more likely to be transferred.

4.1.3. Whistler Centre for Sustainability (WCS)

Creation

All Whistler key informants gave similar answers to the question: *What was the rationale behind creating the WCS?* All respondents described the rationale as being multiple. A representative quote described this rationale as:

...the rationale was, we've developed a lot of expertise and a lot of time and energy and we are really proud of what we have accomplished. We've also spent a fair amount of money. We think we have a value proposition to offer other communities, especially other resort communities. We should set up and house some kind of society or some kind of non-profit or whatever that can actually deliver that value to other communities. So basically it was a way to house the intellectual capital that had been created through all of these extensive processes. (W2)

One respondent described another rationale relating to cost of innovation behind the WCS creation because:

...I think one of the reasons for creating the WCS was that we realized that when you are innovating there is always a cost that goes along with innovation. And when you learn something in terms of our particular field, it is very nice to be able to share that with others and help other organizations we actually thought we had a reasonable model so wanted to come up with a way of putting it into practice. (W5)

The respondent also described how they found sections of the *Whistler2020* copied and used in sustainability documents by other consulting houses such as by a resort in China. This was described to have led to the realization of, "why don't we do that ourselves and create an independent organization that would help us further *Whistler2020* but also become self-sufficient that could also help other communities in Canada" (W5).

Role and Purpose

Respondents gave a range of similar answers to the question: *What is the role of the WCS in creating and disseminating the Whistler Model?* A representative quote describes the purpose of the WCS as:

...a separate non-profit organization that would take over *Whistler2020* and manage it and facilitate it, and then do all the indicators as a third party, and to share Whistler's best practices with other communities and be able to charge for it, run off a fee for service structure. (W3)

The term 'share' was very often used, and 'export' sometimes used in describing the transfer of knowledge from Whistler through the WCS to other communities. There was also a strong acknowledgement that Whistler had created something (the Whistler Model) that is "still one of the most compelling and most successful models of the day"

(W4), and is worth sharing with other communities because, “when you’re successful, people want to copy you” (W4). Additionally it was acknowledged it was worth sharing because Whistler had “spent a lot of time” (W7) and resources in developing the Whistler Model. All respondents also mentioned the importance of spreading sustainable practices from Whistler with one respondent describing the strategy as to, “start local and let the rings go out” (W7) and Whistler to be an, “example to others” (W7). In addition to this they described the role of the WCS at the macro scale of sustainability:

...what good is a sustainability community without a sustainable planet to put it on and so therefore there was a definite understanding of that we need to spread that idea... it was more of a recognition of major change needed and that if we could contribute to that and champion that and promote that then we would. (W2)

Even though the WCS has many roles, one respondent observed: “most of our [WCS] efforts go out as consulting and helping other communities work on plans similar to the Whistler Model and so we are sharing that model with other communities” and that this is done “through our Quick Start program and into Official Community Plans” (W7). The communities the WCS work with were described to be primarily small communities because larger communities tend to hire larger companies to do this work. An additional role of the WCS to sharing Whistler’s learning and knowledge with other communities was described by one respondent as to also bring back learning from other communities to make Whistler stronger - describing this relationship as “a give and take” (W5).

The WCS was created as an independent organization because the purpose of the WCS was to be “of the community” in order to have an organization that is “something that takes it out of government so it isn’t owned by government” (W1). Even though the WCS is independent from the municipality, some of the community has always seen the WCS “as a part of local government” (W1). This has meant that the WCS has, “spent a lot of time overcoming misconceptions and misunderstandings about what the WCS does” (W7) and one respondent felt, “we [WCS] aren’t a burden on the community, we are a benefit to the community” (W7).

Quick Start Process

The Quick Start process is conducted by the WCS in partnership with a community to develop an Integrated Community Sustainability Plan (ICSP). The process is meant to take eight to ten months because it is intended to be, “a quick process so that smaller budgets, \$50,000 or so, and therefore a smaller and shorter process because some of these ICSPs can go on for two years” (W3). One respondent observed a major motivation behind communities partaking in developing an ICSP was because:

...all the municipalities in BC, and I think other provinces, in order to apply for additional gas tax funding they have to show that they have done sustainability planning. So it can either be an ICSP or it can be some plan that they have done that has incorporated sustainability, it is pretty loose. So what we [WCS] have always said is the best thing to do is to develop a comprehensive sustainability plan. (W3)

Although the Quick Start process is a short, intensive process, it involves a number of steps as outlined by one respondent:

...instead of using the community to develop a bunch of this stuff we [WCS] suggest that this is a bunch of the stuff you should go for or with and this is what specifically you get input on. We always do a big public thing at the beginning to get at the vision. Because that has to be shared and created by the community because we want everybody to own the vision for the future and we meet with the advisory committee for a series of meetings so six to eight meetings throughout the process. (W3)

Even though the WCS makes suggestions for the ICSP and there are, “similarities that you see through pretty much every ICSP” (W4), the WCS will often, “change the wording a little bit (sustainability objectives) so that it is community specific and resonates with the community more” (W3). The community is also given by the WCS, “a recommended group of types of people or types of sectors” (W3). The community then advertises the Community Sustainability Action Team (CSAT) positions in the local newspaper or website and accepts applications. The community selects the CSAT members who are then approved by the local council. The CSAT selection process takes roughly a month and the WCS, “always suggest 15 to 20 [members] so that it is representative of the community” (W3). The WCS has developed an ICSP with

five resort municipalities in British Columbia and follows up the process by checking up on the communities and offering any further support if needed.

4.1.4. Changes Over Time

Since *Whistler2020*'s adoption by the Resort Municipality of Whistler (RMOW) in 2005 the Whistler Model has evolved over time. All Whistler respondents acknowledged that the shift has occurred due to the last municipal elections (2011) with the complete turnover of council members and mayor. A representative description of this shift from one respondent is:

...I wouldn't say our current council are strong motivators of *Whistler2020* although it continues to be our vision and we still continue to use it and its guiding principles in all our community engagement. I don't think they actually realize how integrated it is and how much we continue to use it through engagement and in committee meetings. The previous two or three councils, almost everyone got elected on the platform of delivering and executing *Whistler2020*. It was that popular as a tool for moving the community towards what they wanted. There was a notion although an economic task force existed it was pretty easy to present a myth of sustainability being about the environment even though the reality of it was if someone picked up the document [*Whistler2020*] would realize it is hugely broad. (W1)

This shift in focus by elected municipal officials is reflected in part by the change in work that the WCS conducts for RMOW described by one respondent as:

...in 2011 we [WCS] met with the task forces again and thought about a different way of action planning because we felt that the task force model had run its course, it had been six years. A lot of great actions have come forward, it was harder to come up with transformational actions and we were also finding that we wanted it to be more integrated. So we thought of changing the model to more of a sector based model. So for example, we would work with the Hotel Association and all the providers and they would look at actions across all of the strategy areas. That was 2011 and then there was the elections happened at the end of 2011 and council cut all funding to continue *Whistler2020* except for continuing to monitor and report on the indicators. However, in 2012 that is all we did, had funding for was to collect the data for 94 indicators that we report on. So no action planning, no community engagement around *Whistler2020*, no engagement or action planning. (W3)

Even though these changes in RMOW's focus have occurred one respondent stated that the *Whistler2020* is still a "rigorous backbone" (W1) even though it has "ended up side lined" (W6). This change was described by one respondent to have happened because:

...there was a shift that they felt like the previous model wasn't working as well as it could. We still use the language and a lot of the metrics but the task force vision was changed and then not carried forward by not providing funding. So I think part of it was a turn in public perception. So it wasn't just interest, it was perception change. It is a real art to keep the community engaged and it is not easy. And, something that was intended to be very apolitical became political.(W6)

Many respondents voiced their concerns over the change in political leadership in Whistler. One lesson to be learned from what has occurred in Whistler with the Whistler Model was identified by a respondent to be around the issue of longevity and that the key is continual engagement so that, "there has to be that sense of ownership" (W5). Another respondent described the lesson learned should be that, "the most useful things that a location can do is to make this process as apolitical as possible" (W6).

4.2. Policy Transfer

The flexibility of transfer of the Whistler Model to other resort municipalities in British Columbia, was examined using a document analysis and key informant interviews. The document analyses were on the ICSPs from the City of Fernie, the City of Kimberley, the Town of Osoyoos, the District of Invermere, and the Village of Harrison Hot Springs. Interviews took place with seven respondents from Whistler and five respondents from Harrison Hot Springs.

A brief background description of ICSPs and the WCS Quick Start process is below. Next the ICSP document analyses results for Fernie, Harrison, Invermere, Kimberley, and Osoyoos are summarized in eight components; general, strategy areas, initial recommended actions, indicators and monitoring, participants, vision, targets, and next steps. Lastly, the results of the interviews conducted with Harrison Hot Springs respondents about the ICSP Quick Start process in Harrison Hot Springs are described. These interview results are categorized into themes of: previous sustainability work;

ICSP Quick Start process conditions; Quick Start process engagement; constraints and issues; role and impact of ICSP; and, the future for the ICSP.

4.2.1. Integrated Community Sustainability Plan (ICSP)

The WCS has created partnerships with various resort communities to create their ICSPs, including: the City of Fernie; the City of Kimberley; the Town of Osoyoos; the District of Invermere; and, the Village of Harrison Hot Springs. Many of these small communities already had integrated sustainability policies as a part of their Official Community Plans (OCPs), but entered into partnerships with the WCS to aid in developing a comprehensive community sustainability planning process. Table 4.1 shows the resort municipalities that have worked with the WCS to create their ICSPs.

Table 4.1. List of resort municipalities with titles of Integrated Community Sustainability Plans (ICSP)

Partner with the WCS	Name of ICSP
City of Fernie	<i>Forever Fernie</i>
City of Kimberley	<i>Imagine Kimberley</i>
District of Invermere	<i>Imagine Invermere</i>
Town of Osoyoos	<i>SEE Osoyoos Succeed</i>
Village of Harrison Hot Springs	<i>Sustainable Harrison</i>

The ICSP is the highest level of policy document within a community and integrates all plans and policies existing in the community (Whistler Centre for Sustainability 2011c). It also gives a comprehensive framework for community decision making as well as direction for future initiatives by the community. The ICSP is a process as much as a plan and the community is highly involved. It is written by the community and is intended to guide them towards a long-term desirable, sustainable future. This is done through the identification of strategy areas and actions that are implemented, monitored for progress, and reviewed annually. Considerable community engagement is used in the development of their vision. This vision is linked to realistic collaborative actions and planning. The ICSP provides a chance to develop long term goals towards success and sustainability that shape communities by guiding investment and

infrastructure decisions. The ICSP is also useful at preparing communities for challenging global issues such as long-term climate change impacts, and rising energy and resource prices. Completing the ICSP also opens access to certain funding opportunities.

The Quick Start ICSP process was developed by the WCS to combine principles of TNS sustainability framework with *Whistler2020* (Table 4.2). It is an award winning process that uses a model that is uniquely adapted to the context, needs, assets, and vision of the community it is being applied to (Whistler Centre for Sustainability 2011c). The Quick Start process provides an ICSP, applicable actions, and implementation tools geared towards sustainability. The purpose of the Quick Start program is to allow communities to begin working towards sustainability immediately. This program is a less resource intensive and quicker option compared to a comprehensive ICSP and OCP update with multi-stakeholder task forces. However, for small to medium sized communities the latter approach requires considerable resources and is process intensive. The ICSP report created from the Quick Start process has many different components. For the purpose of this study each of the ICSPs for Fernie, Harrison Hot Springs, Invermere, Kimberley, and Osoyoos were broken down into components for analysis. These components are; general, strategy areas, initial recommended actions, indicators and monitoring, participants, vision, targets, and next steps.

Table 4.2. Quick Start Process

1. Identify community priorities and strategy areas
 2. Create a Community Sustainability Action Team (CSAT)
 3. CSAT participates in a workshop about TNS and sustainability
 4. CSAT and community members develop a shared vision for the community's desired future (Descriptions of Success)
 5. Research current status of the community (Current Reality)
 6. Develop indicators based on four priority areas
 7. CSAT develop possible actions to move the community from its current reality to its desired future
 8. Community partners take on actions developed by CSAT
 9. Develop a basic monitoring and reporting system
 10. Develop implementation tools and a sustainability decision-making tool based on the ICSP
-

Source: Whistler Centre for Sustainability 2011c; used with permission.

4.2.2. ICSP Document Analysis

General

The ICSPs all followed the process outlined in Figure 4.1 that sequentially involved: public event vision to define community priorities and strategies; creating descriptions of success; current reality; action planning; identifying indicators and monitoring system; and implementation tools. These steps lead to the final output of the ICSP and subsequent monitoring and reporting. All five resort municipalities' ICSPs follow similar structures in terms of chapters, order, structure, and format. Each ICSP document has a statement emphasizing that it is a process as well as a plan for the community. Some text is exactly the same for certain sections for all five communities, primarily in the background chapter about the process and information about the WCS. They also all use the widely accepted United Nations Brundtland Commission definition of sustainability, which is meeting "the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs" (United Nations 1987, p. 6). The four TNS sustainability principles are also specifically outlined in all but Osoyoos's ICSP. They all emphasize the advantages of completing the ICSP process including the terms "long-term goals for success" and "reducing potential costly short-term mistakes". Each ICSP has a number of appendices and these tended to have similar formatting, particularly for the tables.

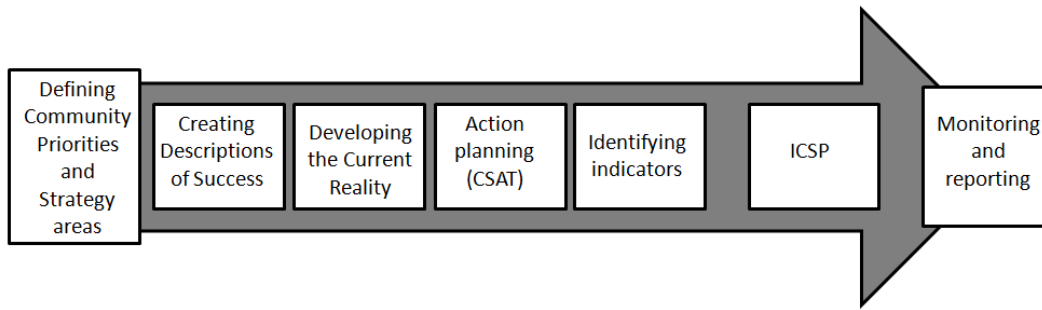


Figure 4.1. Integrated Community Sustainability Plan (ICSP) process diagram

Source: Whistler Centre for Sustainability 2011c, p. 4; used with permission.

Vision

Within each ICSP there is a short list of the main priorities for the resort municipality that make up their overall vision for the community. All of the actions and planning directed by the ICSP are meant to support these priorities. These priorities are also intended to be equally weighted. A list of these priorities and vision statements are in Appendix 3. The number of priorities per resort municipality ICSP varies from three to five. The three categories commonly identified by all five ICSPs are; protecting the environment, ensuring economic viability, and enriching community life. Fernie and Osoyoos only use these three categories.

It is also important to note that the order of the categories varies. Harrison Hot Springs and Kimberley add a similar fourth priority; ‘enhancing the visitor experience’ or ‘enhancing the tourism experience’. Invermere adds a different fourth and Kimberley a fifth priority; ‘partnering and collaborating or partnering for success’. All the ICSPs use similar wording for the same categories and a target year for these visions of 2030 except Kimberley that used 2025. The ‘protecting the environment’ category is adapted to location by including specific places within the resort municipality (specific lake, river, etc.) in the statement. Harrison Hot Springs also mentions visitors in its economic vision statement unlike the other ICSPs that only include local residents. Harrison Hot Springs and Kimberley also include a slightly different wording within their enriching community life priority which includes ‘sense of place’ and ‘quality of life’ within the vision statement.

Participants

The development and implementation of ICSPs involved a high level of community participation. This participation is evident because of the number of community meetings where considerable input by the community contributed to different parts of the ICSP, such as the strategy areas descriptions of success. Each resort municipality also had a Community Sustainability Action Team (CSAT) as the advisory committee for each community to be representatives and work closely with the WCS team. The role of the CSAT was to provide input on public engagement opportunities, assist the development of the community vision, input on current reality and indicators, and in the development of recommended actions.

To gain a better understanding of how any similarities in the ICSPs might have been influenced by community participation the CSAT participants were tabulated for each resort municipality. A table in Appendix 4 shows the number, organization affiliation, and specific position for each of the resort municipalities CSAT members. Members of the CSAT tended to include the resort municipalities: mayor, planning staff, organization representatives (Chamber of Commerce, local Tourism Association, local councils, etc.), and members of the public. The number of CSAT members varied and ranged from 12 to 22 (Osoyoos 12, Harrison 15, Invermere 17, Kimberley 17, and Fernie 22).

Strategy Areas

Each ICSP contains a chapter on the sustainability strategy areas for their community. It identifies eight to ten different strategy areas that create a comprehensive vision of what the community should and could be doing. Some ICSPs combine specific strategy areas so that they are somewhat tailored to the community. While strategy areas vary between the ICSPs they all cover the following general areas:

- Buildings and Sites
- Community and Individual Health
- Economy and Work
- Accessible, Appropriate and Attainable Housing
- Education and Skills Training

- Arts, Culture and Heritage
- Recreation and Leisure
- Land Use and Natural Areas
- Transportation and Accessibility
- Energy, Resources and Waste

The only exception to the above is Harrison Hot Springs that uses an "Economy and Tourism" strategy area while the other ICSPs label this as "Economy and Work".

Each strategy area also contains a number of descriptions of success. These descriptions of success are specific mini-visions that describe what the future success of the community would look like. The purpose of these descriptions of success are for them to be used for decision making and determining actions. The descriptions were created through a public event with the community to discuss and describe visions of success for each strategy area. The input received at the public event was used to create a draft list of descriptions of success that can be later reviewed and fine tuned by the CSAT which is the community advisory group for the ICSP process.

The similarity of the strategy area descriptions of success between the ICSPs was compared in an Excel table to arrange and order the descriptions. This comparison revealed a wide variation in the ICSPs with a total of 233 different descriptions of success. However, there are 9 (3.9%) common descriptions of success that are reported in all five ICSPs. These are:

- Housing type range
- Construction that utilizes local and sustainable materials
- Renewable and energy efficient buildings
- Accessible health services
- Public facilities and outdoor spaces
- Appropriate housing options
- Vibrant, livable neighborhoods
- Good community design to reduce energy use
- Access to affordable and healthy food

There are 17 (7.3%) of the same descriptions of success in four ICSPs, 35 (15.0%) occurred in three, and 61 (26.2%) in two. Almost half (47.6%) of the total number of descriptions of success are unique to their ICSP. These unique descriptions tend to be specific and more detailed. For example, from the Fernie ICSP, “Highway 3 is an attractive, multi-modal transportation corridor that creates a positive visitor experience and does not act as a barrier within the community” (Whistler Centre for Sustainability 2011a, p. 5). It must be noted that since some descriptions of success are quite broad they were counted more than once if there was overlap with more than one description from another ICSP.

The descriptions of success were also analyzed to determine the relative importance of tourism in the ICSPs. This was done by analyzing the number and proportion of tourism related terms used in the descriptions of success. The terms were: tourist, tourism, visitor, ecotourism, resort, seasonal residents, and seasonal workforce. The proportion and percentage of descriptions of success with these tourism related words for each ICSP are shown in Table 4.3. Harrison Hot Springs has the highest number and percentage of tourism key words with 18 of their 72 (25.0%) being tourism related descriptions of success, followed by Osoyoos (16.4%) and Kimberley (12.8%). Fernie (8.6%) and Invermere (8.6%) have the smallest percentage of their descriptions of success relating to tourism.

Table 4.3. Number and percentage of strategy area descriptions of success in the resort municipality Integrated Community Sustainability Plans (ICSP) relating to tourism

Resort Municipality	Total number of descriptions of success	Descriptions of success related to tourism	Percentage of tourism related descriptions of success
Fernie	93	8	8.6%
Harrison Hot Springs	72	18	25.0%
Invermere	71	3	4.2%
Kimberly	78	10	12.8%
Osoyoos	73	12	16.4%

Initial Recommended Actions

Each ICSP has an appendix of recommended actions. These actions are created based on the "sustainability gap". The "sustainability gap" is the difference between the current reality assessment of the community and the strategy area descriptions of success (vision). The recommended actions are generated by members of the CSAT who review the current reality, descriptions of success, and the "sustainability gap" to develop actions. Each recommended action is correlated to a strategy area. The table of recommended actions are organized into these strategy areas and include: description; rationale/comments; level of impact; visibility; cost; ease of implementation; lead partner; other partners; and, other strategy links. However, not all ICSPs include all of these components. These actions tend to be specific and have foreseeable results, most within five years, with only a few up to ten years. These actions are supposed to be tracked and communicated as they are undertaken and completed by the resort municipality. Even though all ICSPs contain recommended actions, some communities divide them into two categories: initial and all others. Initial recommended actions are prioritized and the full list of actions to include action ideas to be implemented at a later point in time. Osoyoos and Fernie give only initial recommended actions, Kimberley include only all recommended actions, and Harrison and Invermere show both.

The initial recommended actions were compared between the ICSPs using an Excel table to arrange and order them. This was done to show to what extent the ICSP framework is adapted when transferred. Only initial actions were used for comparison because not all ICSP gave both, initial and all recommended actions. The comparison found that there are no recommended actions with overlap with four or more of the resort municipality ICSPs. The majority of the recommended actions (154 which is 68.8%) are used by only one ICSP and do not overlap with other resort municipality ICSP actions. However, some actions are used by more than one resort municipality ICSP with 20 (8.9%) of the actions being used by two ICSPs and only 10 (4.5%) used by three ICSPs. Examples of recommended actions with no overlap from other ICSPs include: develop a strategy for public art installations (Kimberley); improve the information centre visibility (Harrison); housing stock survey (Invermere); acquire and enhance Maiden Lake (Fernie); and identify options for separating heavy traffic from the town (Osoyoos). It is important to note that some initial recommended actions are broad and overlap with

multiple recommended actions from other ICSPs. Therefore, for the purpose of this study, broad recommended actions were broken down where needed for calculations of the overlap of recommended actions described above. Table 4.4 shows the percentages of recommended actions for each resort municipality that overlaps with other ICSPs recommended actions.

Table 4.4. Percentage of recommended actions in each Integrated Community Sustainability Plan (ICSP) with overlap with other ICSP recommended actions

Resort municipality	Total number of actions in the ICSP	Percent of actions with no overlap with actions from other ICSPs	Percent of actions with overlap with 1 other ICSP	Percent of actions with overlap with 2 other ICSPs	Percent of actions with overlap with 3 other ICSPs	Percent of actions with overlap with 4 other ICSPs
Fernie	44	59.1%	22.7%	18.2%	0.0%	0.0%
Harrison Hot Springs	26	50.0%	38.5%	11.5%	0.0%	0.0%
Invermere	33	72.7%	12.1%	15.2%	0.0%	0.0%
Kimberley	58	79.3%	10.3%	10.3%	0.0%	0.0%
Osoyoos	62	71.0%	16.1%	12.9%	0.0%	0.0%

The overlap of initial recommended actions for each specific community's ICSP was also examined. This was done to determine whether certain ICSPs had more overlap than others with respect to initial recommended actions. This comparison involved a further breakdown of the Excel table of initial recommended actions. The majority of action plans of each ICSP do not overlap with those in other ICSPs. Kimberley has the highest percentage (79.3%) of actions with no overlap, followed by Invermere (72.7%) and Osoyoos (71.0%). Fernie and Harrison have the smallest percentages of unique actions (Fernie with 59.1% and Harrison with 50.0%). The percentage of actions that overlapped with other resort municipality ICSPs ranged from 20.6% (Kimberley) to 50.0% (Harrison).

Indicators and Monitoring

Each ICSP contains an appendix table of indicators as a tool to monitor the progress of the initial recommended actions and overall status of the community. This is

meant to be a continuous cycle of selecting or reviewing indicators, collecting data, analyzing, preparing reports, and communicating with the community. Harrison Hot Springs and Invermere separate their indicators into two different tables with a list of recommended core indicators and then a separate list of all potential indicators. The rest of the resort municipalities do not separate their indicators. However, all resort municipalities use tables to show their indicators in an appendix and include information such as; name, what is being measured, rationale, source, affiliated strategy, and priority. How these indicators are meant to be used is also included in the ICSP in the form of an appendix called an action monitoring tool. The tool's purpose is to aid decision makers by using a table for each indicator that identifies the; name of action, period, status, lead organization, progress, progress comment, previous progress, previous progress comment, main strategy, and strategy links.

The similarities of indicators in each ICSP were compared. An Excel table was used to to make this comparison. However, because Harrison Hot Springs and Invermere give both initial and all recommended actions, only the initial recommended actions were included in the Excel table. This is because the lists of all actions give up to 9 additional actions for Invermere per category and for Harrison Hot Springs up to 17 additional actions per category on top of the initial recommended actions. The majority, 57 of 97 (58.8%) indicators were found to be unique to their ICSP. Examples of these unique indicators are:

- Proportion of residents attending any category of arts, culture, recreation and leisure offering at least once a month (Harrison) (Whistler Centre for Sustainability 2011e)
- Number of active farms (Kimberley) (Whistler Centre for Sustainability 2011c)
- Average variance of a basket of food between local grocers and comparable community (Invermere) (Whistler Centre for Sustainability 2011b)
- Number of buildings in the City's heritage registry (Fernie) (Whistler Centre for Sustainability 2011a)
- Number of course offerings of secondary and post-secondary school or participants in programs (Osoyoos) (Whistler Centre for Sustainability 2011d)

Only 1 indicator (1.0% of the total) is used by all five resort municipality ICSPs notably, "total greenhouse gas emissions". Four are used by 4 (4%) ICSPs, 11 by three

(11%) and 24 by two (24.7%), This comparison shows that the indicators used in the ICSPs are not a generic list and are instead specific to the resort municipality.

Targets

The only target in the resort municipalities' ICSPs is for Green House Gas (GHG) emissions. Performance indicators are meant to be a tool for continuous measurable improvement and play the role that targets could. A table of the GHG emission targets within each resort municipality ICSP is shown in Table 4.5. A difficulty/strength was assigned for the purpose of this study from "weak" to "medium" to "strong," with "strong" being the most ambitious and forward moving towards sustainability. Some targets are classified as "unique" because they are not a direct GHG reduction and are unique only to that ICSP and therefore could not be classified by strength. The number of GHG emission targets within each ICSP varies from 1 to 5 as well as the type of GHG emissions. GHG emission targets varied from a single overall GHG emission reduction target (Kimberley) to highly individualized targets for the community and corporations (Invermere). The dates range from 2015 to 2030 for reaching these targets. The majority of targets are based on 2007 GHG emission levels which is when the ICSPs were developed. The target decrease in GHG emissions varies from 1 percent to 33 percent (not including the waste diversion target by Harrison Hot Springs). Some targets are not directly GHG reduction emissions such as Harrison Hot Springs who include for waste reduction and diversion, Invermere include parkland dedication in developments, and Osoyoos include increased residential lands. This range in type and time scale for the GHG emission targets makes comparison difficult. Osoyoos appeared to have the weakest, followed by Fernie and then Invermere, and lastly with Harrison Hot Springs and Kimberley as the strongest. The range in strength and types of targets in the ICSPs demonstrate the flexibility and opportunity for resort municipalities to be more or less ambitious.

Table 4.5. Resort municipality Integrated Community Sustainability Plan (ICSP) targets

Community	Type of Target	Target	Strength
Fernie	Community GHG reduction below 2007 levels by 2020	6%	med.
	Corporate GHG reduction below 2005 levels by 2020	20%	med.
Harrison Hot Springs	Community GHG reduction by the Village below 2007 levels by 2020	16%	strong
	Reduction in residential residual waste deposited at the curb-side by year 2016	25%	unique
	Diversion rate for all waste sectors by 2016	70%	unique
Invermere	Corporate GHG reduction below 2007 levels by 2015	20%	strong
	Corporate GHG reduction below 2007 levels by 2020	33%	strong
	Community GHG reduction below 2007 levels by 2015	4.5%	med.
	Community GHG reduction below 2007 levels by 2020	6%	med.
	Parkland dedication in all developments	5%	unique
Kimberley	GHG reduction below 2007 levels by 2020	33%	strong
Osoyoos	Corporate GHG reduction below 2009 levels by 2020	10%	weak
	Community GHG reduction below 2007 levels by 2020	1%	weak
	Community GHG reduction below 2007 levels by 2030	5%	weak
	Allocation for additional residential lands to 2030	80ha	unique

Next Steps

Each resort municipality ICSP has a final chapter about the next steps for continuing down the path of sustainability. This chapter lays out very similar tasks and time lines for the resort municipality after the ICSP implementation. Specifics including the alignment of decision making with the ICSP are outlined. The ICSP is also intended to be flexible and change through time as needed with reviews of the vision, actions, and strategies. However the purpose of long-term sustainability objectives, that outline what sustainability is, are designed to remain unchanged.

The wording was almost exactly the same for all ICSPs when outlining how the resort municipality will partner with community stakeholders on implementation. The role of community partners is to "participate in annual action planning, accept actions for

implementation, participate in communicating sustainability and outcomes of the plan, and get other community partners on board" (Whistler Centre for Sustainability 2011c, p. 24). Partnerships agreements are designed to be used between community partners and municipalities to ensure that the responsibilities and roles are clear. Community partners can sign on during or after the development of the ICSP.

As part of the next steps all five ICSPs outlined the need for the creation of task forces. The ICSPs for Harrison Hot Springs, Invermere, Kimberley, and Fernie have similar wording. Although Osoyoos differs in that it reorganizes the next steps section differently although it still touches on all the same points. The next steps section outlines how the task forces are meant to be created and to take the role of the CSAT from the Quick Start process if the CSAT does not continue after the ICSP is completed. The role of multiple task forces is to spread the work load and engage a larger number of community members as well as broaden the expertise and perspectives being used. It is recommended that task forces be structured with either one task force per strategy, or with several strategies grouped under a task force. What should occur prior, during, and after CSAT/task force meetings is also outlined in the ICSPs.

Other particulars for the future are included in the ICSPs such as the importance of continued monitoring and its functions. The assessment of indicators also is explained in all five ICSPs through four main criteria; validity, reliability, resource intensity, and comparability. The purpose of the indicators was for them to be kept constant except to change as new and improved indicators become available. Descriptions of success statements were to be reviewed and refined every 5 to 10 years by a CSAT team or task force. Actions were also intended to be reviewed and planned annually. Vision and priorities were suggested to be reviewed and refined every 10 to 20 years with community involvement (Whistler Centre for Sustainability 2011e).

4.2.3. *Harrison Hot Springs*

Five key informant interviews were conducted in Harrison Hot Springs which allowed for more insights and perceptions about the ICSP Quick Start process. These interviews give context for the findings from the ICSP document analysis above. They

also contribute information about the challenges and constraints experienced during the process as well as the impacts the ICSP has had on Harrison Hot Springs.

Quick Start Process and Context

All Harrison key informants were asked: *What were the previous sustainability plans or moves towards sustainability before working with the WCS to develop the ICSP?* Responses were similar in mentioning there had been no previous structured sustainability work. A representative response was:

...no. Or at least nothing formal, no structured approach to sustainability. There was minor initiatives that came up at a much more *ad hoc* basis... In terms of the process the whole thing was new to Harrison. We never had a process that was that comprehensive, that looked at how everything relates to each other, and that it looked 30 years out. There had been other projects that had come along that had looked at components or a specific issue. (H2)

One of the key respondents from Whistler explained how the WCS came to work with Harrison on developing its ICSP:

...the 14 resort municipalities meet every year and together they are called the Resort Collaborative. Their [Harrison's] Chief Administrative Officer isn't as actively engaged in the Resort Municipality Initiative [RMI] stuff, it is Andre who is the Economic Development Officer. Just through our connection with him when we worked out this partnership with the Federation of Canadian Municipalities to get that funding we issued a call, hey we got funding for five municipalities to do this Quick Start process, it is new, we are testing it out, and he jumped at it. So it was Harrison and four other communities that jumped at it and we had funding for five so we worked with those five. We worked with three first and then two shortly after. (W3)

This correlated directly with the responses obtained from respondents in Harrison Hot Springs. However, another respondent described the influence of becoming a resort municipality and how it led them to conduct the ICSP as:

...approximately five years ago our Village developed an RMI Strategy. There are ten accommodation providers in Harrison Hot Springs who charge their guests an additional 2 percent Additional Hotel Resort Tax (AHRT). This amounts to approximately \$307,000 per year. The Province redirects these funds monthly to Tourism Harrison. The Government matches these funds to the Village Office for tourism infrastructure. Once that was established we enlisted Andre to develop

an RMI Strategy. These amounts were tied together as the \$307,000 the Village received was used for tourism infrastructure and the \$307,000 the Tourism Society received is used to market Harrison as a resort destination which led us to developing a sustainability plan [the ICSP]. (H5)

One of the key respondents for Harrison Hot Springs explained that: “the original plan was to do a joint ICSP between Kent [a neighboring ‘district municipality’] and us, and we would split it so it would be a quarter of the price but Kent wasn’t interested, it isn’t something that is on their agenda at all” (H5).

However, Harrison decided to move forward and to work with the WCS alone to develop an ICSP. The reasoning behind working with the WCS was described by one respondent as being because:

...A, when you know the people, B, I thought it was a framework that worked, C, they are a resort municipality, D, there was funding opportunities that were there that seemed like a really good fit, and a tourism community with a model that seemed to be working. (H5)

The circumstances were also that, “at that time the mayor was more receptive than the current mayor, more progressive” (H5). Harrison Hot Springs residents were also described as being receptive to the concept of sustainability in particular because “Harrison’s tourist economy depends on what you see when you look around you” (H4).

Harrison Hot Springs respondents were asked about the Quick Start process and level of engagement from the community. The level of engagement was described to be “pretty good” (H5), “generally there was support for it” (H4), and it was “more engaging than most projects” (H2). However some views did conflict over the level of impact or visibility to the community, with one respondent stating, “I don’t think it was something that had a huge impact on the psyche of the community” (H4) and the other, “it was quite a visible and engaging process” (H2).

The engagement and expectations by the CSAT committee were varied. One respondent described the CSAT committee to have, “started strong and then started to weaken after a little while” (H3). As one respondent observed:

...there was people that came and went on the committee [CSAT]. There were some people involved in the committee that felt it didn’t go

the way they wanted it to go or envisioned it to be. People that came and went tended to have very specific, environmental agendas and they were looking for something that was going to support that rather than something that was as broad and all-encompassing as this project was. It probably wasn't as radical as they wanted it to be. (H4)

ICSPs described the planned development of task forces, but to date in Harrison Hot Springs they have not been created. As one respondent observed:

...I don't think there is a lot of political will for it. Interest from the public, there is some... I think committees are helpful you have a lot of people who are really excited and are passionate about it to push the local agenda, in that way it would be helpful. But where we are now I don't think there is a lot of that out there. (H5)

Constraints and Issues

Respondents from Harrison Hot Springs were asked about what constraints or issues were present for the ICSP and the Quick Start process. The main two issues they identified were capacity and politics. The constraint around capacity referred to municipal staff. As one respondent observed, Harrison Hot Springs "didn't have an Economic Development Officer before Andre so there was no one looking at the broader issues" (H2). There are also capacity issues around resources and the limited tax base for running the municipality described as, "for us [Harrison] it isn't so easy to get into, with Whistler being so grand and big and lots of money coming in it's much easier" (H3). This capacity issue was described to have led in part to the reason for the lack of implementation of the ICSP thus far, "I think the document had some good stuff in it in terms of ideas of moving forward in Harrison. A lot of it didn't move forward" (H4). The ICSP not moving forward quickly was stated to be because, "the problem with it, with any document like it anywhere and certainly in a place this small, is fine you got it but who is going to implement it, who has the time and resources to make it happen" (H4). Funding was not considered a barrier for the Quick Start process to occur but it was for implementation. This is because Harrison Hot Springs had matching funds from the Federal Commission of Municipalities for the Quick Start process, "half was municipal general budget and half came from Federal Commission of Municipalities, so \$30,000 total" (H5). Funding was a barrier to implementation as well as the limited capacity and size of the community. The following comments from a key informant offer a representative description of this issue:

...as far as implementing the plan afterwards, yes, funding is always a big issue and man power. When we looked at the end and needed to plan the short term and long term goals and objectives and then tried to identify the people that were going to make that happen. The first time we looked through it and basically we were talking about three different groups; the village [municipal], the chamber, or TourismHarison with about 70 percent being the village. Realistically that is not going to happen particularly when the chamber and TourismHarrison are effectively run by the same people. It really boils down to a dozen people no matter how many organizations you list and a very small tax base. (H4)

The current political restraint was described as resulting from, “the council that initiated this plan that changed at the last election and Harrison politics tends to be, ‘if it was done by the previous council then I am not going to have anything to do with that’” (H4). Education around sustainability at the municipal staff level was also seen as a large barrier. One respondent stated, “that’s the real challenge, how do you embed this so that it is not left to the whim of council and whatever their particular hot button is” (H2).

Role and Impact of the Integrated Community Sustainability Plan (ICSP)

The current role of how the ICSP is used, and the impacts from the ICSP were discussed with Harrison Hot Springs respondents. The main role of the ICSP mentioned by respondents was that of the creation of discussion around issues in the community relating to sustainability. One respondent noted that “most importantly it brought forward an important conversation that as a community we started to have and more importantly at a corporate level we are starting to have and these concepts that were totally foreign are now becoming more mainstream and acceptable” (H5). The ICSP was even described to be, “definitely worth the effort and the time if only for the awareness” (H2). It also is seen as assisting when applying for grants and giving direction for the community. This is summarized by one respondent’s response:

...it’s a guiding document and right now more than anything it is an educational piece and discussion piece more than anything. Also for things like grants, that was my biggest selling pitch to the Chief Administrative Officer that there are a lot of grants so that when we apply we can say in our ICSP is X priority, it is another tool to use. (W5)

One tool that came directly from the ICSP process is the Sustainable Criteria Process. For one respondent the impact this tool has had is that, “now for all the development reports I take forward there is a tool [Sustainable Criteria Process] that I evaluate every development proposal, so I am using it, it lets us know if a development is moving us toward or away from our sustainability goals” (H5).

The ICSP has also been seen to have introduced “a language to coach it [sustainability] in and discuss it” (H4). Respondents not working directly for the municipality were not aware of how the ICSP had been integrated or how the ICSP was being used by the municipality. However, it was still acknowledged that ICSP has been useful in that:

...I think it [ICSP] was a useful thing even though this council might not do too much with it. It is a great framework for moving us forward and because it is so long term it still remains valid and applicable. And even if some of the things are done on a piece meal basis it gives us a reference point looking at what to do next. In that sense it is still a very useful thing. It is not as useful as it could of been if the same council had moved on into the next three years and said now we are going to implement. But it is still useful. (H2)

Originally the ICSP, “was going to be integrated into the whole village process” (H2). Even though direct integration of the ICSP has not occurred yet, “a lot of the ideas are discussed at every council meeting” (H5).

Two respondents mentioned lessons they learned after thinking back about the ICSP process and the outcomes from it. Both respondents discussed how this type of process takes time and that there are issues around personal and other people’s expectations about the process and its outcomes. Expectations tended to be that the process of moving towards sustainability would be quicker. However it was felt that, “it was a flexible enough framework and you are talking about things, tourism, infrastructure, social, entertainment, things that apply to every community. It is just the degree to which they are playing a role. It was flexible and it worked” (H2).

Respondents tended to note that for the future they hoped the ICSP would be continued to be used but in a more in depth way. Plans for the future are to “try and work with this (ICSP) as much as we [the municipality] can and when we get to a revision of

our OCP we will have to use some of this [ICSP] as well to put into that for further direction as the years go on" (H3). The hopes for the future of one respondent reflect common themes mentioned:

...I think it was a great process. It is a little disappointing we aren't doing more with it but that has everything to do with council. It is still there and being used which is great. I would like to see it move forward in a more structured way. But you only have so many resources and if council doesn't see it as a priority then it can't happen. (H2)

5. Discussion

5.1. Introduction

The findings from this study's document analysis and key informant interviews are discussed in this chapter with reference to relevant literature (presented in Chapter 2). One outcome of the research was the development of a framework (Figure 5.1) based on this study's results to illustrate the transfer process between the case studies. The sections of this chapter correlate with different components of the framework as indicated on the right hand side of Figure 5.1. The chapter first presents the framework with subsequent discussion sections on: The Natural Step versus the Whistler Model; Whistler as a central innovator; policy transfer from Whistler to resort municipalities; policy transfer from Whistler to Harrison Hot Springs; the overall transferability of Whistler Model; constraints/resistance to policy transfer; and, governance and sustainability.

5.2. Framework

A framework of policy transfer (Figure 5.1) between the case studies was developed based on the results of this study. This framework illustrates the policy transfer from Whistler, through the Whistler Centre for Sustainability (WCS), an agent of transfer, to new resort municipalities in British Columbia. It also identifies the constraints (conditions) and implementation (degree of policy transfer).

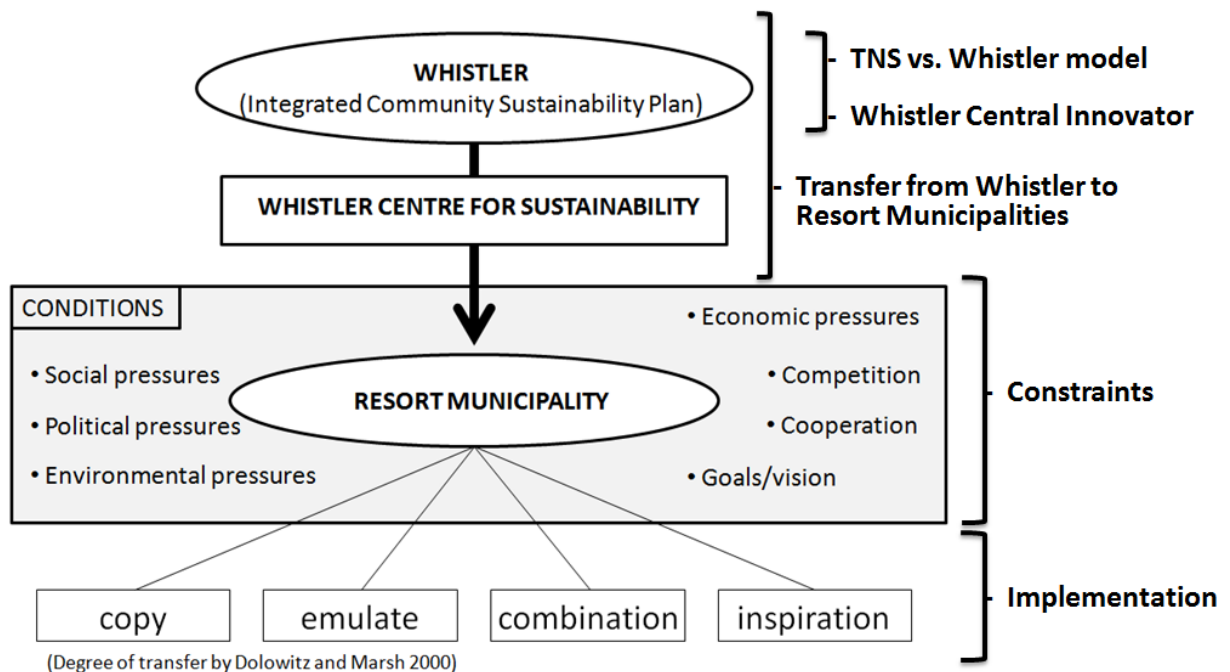


Figure 5.1. Policy and information transfer from Whistler through the Whistler Centre for Sustainability (WCS) to resort municipalities and the conditions affecting the transfer

Amongst resort municipalities, Whistler is considered a site of innovative practices and policies. The development of the *Whistler2020* has drawn considerable attention internationally with respect to its move towards a comprehensive sustainability governance approach. This knowledge around sustainability and planning is transferred through the WCS to other resort municipalities. As shown in the figure above (Figure 5.1), policy and governance information is transferred through the WCS to the resort municipality. The result is an output of new policy and governance in the resort municipality that, compared to the original model in Whistler, has a level of adaptation or degree of transfer in the form of; copying, emulating, combining, or inspiring, as outlined by Dolowitz and Marsh (2000). The degree of transfer depends on the conditions and characteristics of the resort municipality and the information/policy transferred. The scalability and flexibility of the governance or policy transferred are particularly important attributes affecting the degree of transfer and potential for the long term success of the new implemented governance or policy. Conditions continuously change which leads to resort municipalities needing new policy and governance to aid in the adaptation to

these new conditions. The WCS has information and policy solutions particularly relating to sustainability that can assist these resort municipalities looking for new policy.

5.3. The Role of The Natural Step (TNS) in the Development of the Whistler Model

Whistler has become well known for being an innovative, sustainability leader through its development of a unique model, the Whistler Model. However, “The Natural Step” (TNS) framework contributed to its development. This raises the question of how innovative the Whistler Model really is. Results from the key informant interviews and literature will aid in addressing this question.

It was clear from the interviews and literature on Whistler that the *Whistler2020* was based on TNS. The community of Whistler seemed very well versed in the story of Karl-Henrik Robèrt and his visit to Whistler that led to a few talks in Whistler about TNS which then led to the Resort Municipality of Whistler (RMOW) to officially work with TNS. It was even noted in one interview that, “we [Whistler] really did use the TNS framework a lot, more than any other community” (W2). However it is more difficult to separate what parts of the Whistler Model are TNS and what has either come from other frameworks or what has been developed specifically in Whistler. As described in the Chapter 4 Results on the Whistler Model, what parts of the Whistler Model are TNS depends on the way in which the TNS model is defined.

TNS uses a combination of different concepts and approaches including a five level framework, sustainability conditions, a scientific approach, strategic step by step approach, and backcasting. TNS uses a five level framework of; systems, success, strategic, actions, and tools (*The Natural Step* n.d.). The system level involves defining the level to be examined. In the context of sustainability it involves the entire system of the biosphere. The success level requires meeting the four system conditions of sustainability where there are no increases in substance concentrations, degradation, and people can continually meet their needs. The strategic level involves guidelines for organizations that TNS has created as part of their framework.

The most important of these strategies is noted to be backcasting. The concept of backcasting is considered to be very crucial and can be defined as “the idea of planning from a future vision of a desirable outcome of the planning, followed by the question: what shall we do today to get there?” (Holmberg and Robèrt 2002, p. 30). The system of backcasting gives a systematic approach that is very useful for complex problems in planning (Holmberg and Robèrt 2002). The five level framework of TNS incorporates many useful tools, concepts, and approaches although they are designed for application in a very wide range of contexts. This requires each organization or community to tailor solutions to their own situations

There are concepts and approaches used in the Whistler Model that are not specifically outlined as part of the TNS framework. Some of these additional approaches were mentioned in the interviews such as; community involvement, community relations, Scenario Based Planning MetroQuest software, and envision sustainability tools (Suutari 2007). The software allowed for five alternative futures to be explored and evaluated based on community workshops and sustainability (Suutari 2007). TNS is not very specific, for example in identifying the time frame within which the goals should be set for backcasting. The Integrated Community Sustainability Plans (ICSP) created in partnership between resort municipalities and the WCS which facilitated transfer of the Whistler Model also exhibit TNS influences. The most notable are backcasting, and sustainability principles taken directly from TNS. As stated in Fernie’s ICSP, the Quick Start process, “uses The Natural Step sustainability framework and *Whistler2020*” (Forever Fernie 2011, p. 6). However, in a strict sense the Whistler Model, although highly influenced by TNS, is not in its entirety TNS. It was noted in one interview that what was unique about the Whistler Model was the combination of TNS with the other approaches. Therefore, the Whistler Model is a hybridization of many approaches, models, and tools combined into a unique and innovative framework particularly useful to similar types of communities.

The combination of TNS and other approaches and tools used by Whistler to create the Whistler Model can be described as innovative because innovation is linked to situation. According to Mohr’s (1969) definition of innovation it is “the successful introduction into an applied situation of means or ends that are new to that situation” (p. 112). Therefore what Whistler did with working with TNS was innovative even though

they did not create TNS but because it was adapted to a new situation. Even the introduction of new ideas and concepts into the Whistler Model, such as TNS and sustainability, can be defined as innovative based on Hall and Williams' (2008) definition of innovation which includes the introduction of new ideas. Whistler was also not just an inventor, but an innovator because innovation differs from an invention because innovations must be implemented, whereas an invention is simply creating something new (Hjalager 2010; Mohr 1969; Peters and Pikkemaat 2006). As Peck and Theodore (2010) observe, mobile policies tend to not be transferred in their complete form, but instead are transferred in pieces and become synthesized models. The Whistler Model is clearly a synthesized model of a number of different pieces of models, approaches, and policies. It was created by a process of transfer of pieces of models and policies that in turn were synthesized and adapted. Whistler has created a comprehensive sustainability document, *Whistler2020*, that represents the highest level policy document in the resort community and in turn has become a diffuser of these innovations through the WCS.

5.4. Whistler as a Central Innovator

Innovation is important within the tourism sector due to a number of factors including the competitive nature of the industry. The development behaviour in the tourism sector, destinations, and tourism enterprises are increasingly being described with the term "innovation" (Hjalager 2002). Innovation has been identified as a potentially important driver in the growth of tourism; however, thus far, there is a lack of empirical knowledge to support this claim (Kvam and Straete 2010). There is a range of external and internal factors that encourage or discourage innovation in tourism (Hjalager 2010).

In this study there is evidence that Whistler is a central innovator due to its role as a point of transfer or diffusion from which the Whistler Model, mainly through the actions of the WCS, is being transferred to other places. In line with the arguments proposed by Mossberger and Wolman (2003), the status Whistler has acquired as a central innovator and leader may be in part attributed to it being a large and wealthy community. The danger in wealth, size, and status of a community as the reasons for being more frequently tapped for policy ideas is that this can lead to the spread and

implementation of 'fashionable' policies that are inappropriate and lead to policy failure (Mossberger and Wolman 2003). Fashionable policies can cloud the judgement of decision makers who may therefore jump to inappropriate or rushed policy transfer decisions (Mossberger and Wolman 2003; Stone 1999). Whistler's wealth and size is likely related to Whistler's positive reputation, high level of innovation, and high frequency of being tapped for policy ideas; such relationships have been well noted in the literature (Eisenstadt 1963; Hage and Aiken 1967; Mansfield 1963). Other factors linked to innovation creation and adoption include; environment, motivation, ideology, competence, level of professionalism, decentralization, leadership, and other variables (Mohr 1969). In Whistler, as discussed below, it is clear that there were certain environmental conditions, leadership, and motivations present.

There are certain attributes of Whistler that enhance its ability to be highly innovative. One of the most important is that Whistler is a purpose built tourism resort centered initially on winter sports activities but with more recent four-season recreational activities. Most rural communities in British Columbia are dependent upon various forms of natural resource extraction such as forestry, mining, and fishing activities. In 1975 when Whistler was granted Resort Municipality status by the provincial government – the first such designation in Canada – there was an understanding that the economic model for a purpose-built resort was different than that of other municipalities and therefore required distinct and innovative powers and legislative abilities, new revenue tools for marketing, and infrastructure maintenance.

Over the years, Whistler has been innovative in many ways. Previous to the development of the *Whistler2020* these innovations included environmental management and growth management strategies such as established limits to growth in the form of bed units. The Whistler Model encompasses many different types of innovation that fit within all five of Hjalager's (2002) categories of innovation (product innovation, process innovation, management innovation, logistics innovation, and institutional innovation). Production innovation was shown when changes were made to move towards sustainability that affected current products (skiing and snowboarding) as well as created new products, such as mountain biking, in the attempt to diversify within tourism. One example is the protection of backcountry areas from overuse and degradation as well as a no net habitat loss policy to safeguard the environment and

visitor/resident experience. Process innovations are seen throughout Whistler and can be particularly noted by Whistler Blackcomb the company that operates the ski lifts and many other supportive businesses in Whistler (e.g. restaurants and retail outlets). Whistler Blackcomb has initiated many different changes and programs such as a no idling program for its snow support vehicles and carpooling program for its workers living outside of Whistler. There have also been process innovations within the governance system with higher engagement and involvement of stakeholders and also with the introduction of the monitoring system. Management innovation has occurred through the creation of the WCS and collaboration that occurs between the WCS and community partners. Logistics innovations have occurred within Whistler through the expansion of the Whistler Transit System (previously the Wave Transit Whistler system) and with the upgrade of the main highway to Whistler (Sea to Sky Highway). Institutional innovation in Whistler occurred with the integration of the *Whistler2020* and monitoring program that was created and run through the WCS.

It has been noted in the literature that innovative policies are very often created through the development of practices and pilot schemes that frequently occur at the local scale (Stone 1999). This is what occurred in Whistler with the creation of the *Whistler2020*. Being a central innovator, which involves developing innovative policies and pilot schemes, is also more expensive than directly transferring pre-conceived, adapted policies or approaches. The *Whistler2020* is an example of how expensive these innovations are because the *Whistler2020* was very costly and took a relatively long period of time (2.5 years) in comparison to the Quick Start process, which is designed to take roughly six months. This high cost to develop the *Whistler2020* was mentioned in a number of the Whistler interviews; however, no regrets were mentioned. The willingness of the community to partake in the expensive process was likely due to the conditions including the high level of excitement felt in the community around the project as well as the fact that it was during the end of the 1990s which was the height of Whistler's success with respect to increasing visitation numbers and rising status. As demonstrated through interview responses, there was also an understanding that being innovative is crucial to remaining competitive as a tourist destination and that it was important for Whistler to strive to be innovative with sustainability to make the resort an international example for others on how to move towards sustainability.

Whistler can also be conceptualized as an early adopter because it was the first resort community in North America to adopt TNS framework. Whistler exhibits many of the characteristics that early adopters tend to hold. One early adopter characteristic, as noted by Rogers (1995), is willingness to cope with relatively high levels of uncertainty when adopting an innovation. This is in contrast to most organizations or enterprises that are reluctant to implement change (innovations), unless there is a strong motivation to do so because of a threat or challenge faced in terms of growth (Hjalager 2002). In the case of Whistler there was a specific challenge because of the self-imposed restrictions to growth in the form of the bed unit cap that was reached. The solution to this challenge was to advance beyond the growth restrictions by taking a sustainability approach to development. Innovators or early adopters also tend to be highly active in gathering information about new ideas (Rogers 1995). This was the case in Whistler, where, because of its reputation and involvement in networks beyond the local system and its exposure to mass media, the likelihood of developing innovations in Whistler and their subsequent transfer to other areas, was enhanced.

It is important to keep in mind that the Whistler Model is continually being shaped and changed over time by many different influences and that it is not a static model. Innovation creation is a continuous process rather than episodic for most enterprises (Hjalager 2010). For the case of Whistler it appears this continuous process of innovation is occurring as the model has adapted to differing conditions and community interests.

5.5. Transfer from Whistler to Resort Municipalities

Decision-making can be improved through the examination of policies and practices from other areas and jurisdictions (policy transfer) and can result in larger rather than incremental adjustments to existing policies (Stone 1999). By examining policies from other areas and jurisdictions, these policies can be used as benchmarks and standards against which to compare performance. Policy transfer is particularly important in situations where decision makers are faced with a relatively "new" situation where current policy cannot effectively deal with the situation, and decision makers are therefore uncertain how to respond (Stone 1999). By publicizing information on new

policies and innovations as the WCS does, local authorities gain recognition for their successes and, increase local and external support.

The transfer of innovations from Whistler to resort municipalities is occurring in a structured format through the WCS as shown in the framework illustrated in Figure 5.1. It has been stated in the literature that policy transfer can be difficult to identify unless the transfer is relatively significant (Stone 1999). The formal nature of the WCS has resulted in significant policy transfer (the ICSP). It is also clear that the ICSPs in these resort municipalities are not a result of policy convergence because, as described by Bennett (1991), policy convergence is a process that is gradual over time whereas the ICSP transfer occurred quickly, over roughly a six month period.

5.5.1. Policy Transfer

What is being transferred through the WCS can be referred to as “policy transfer” because it is the importing of knowledge and policies that are then implemented with the hope of attaining similar success to that achieved with the original policy. This fits within the definitions of policy transfer found in the literature including those of: Stone (1999) whose definition discusses the transfer of “innovative policy”; Dolowitz and Marsh (1996) whose definition includes knowledge as a part of transfer; and, Wolman and Page (2002) who include the implementation of policy and knowledge in their definition. Further, what is being transferred by the WCS includes concepts, goals, ideas, program designs, structure, and techniques that are specifically included as a part of policy transfer in the definition by Wolman and Page (2002) as well as institutions, ideologies, ideas/attitudes, and lessons included in Dolowitz and Marsh’s (2000) definition. These additional components included in the policy transfer definitions by Wolman and Page (2002) and Dolowitz and Marsh (2000) underlie the basis of the transferred policy (in this study the ICSP). The policy transferred can also be considered an innovative policy or type of innovation. Policy learning inevitably takes place when policy transfer is occurring. It can also lead to policy termination (Stone 1999), however this was not noted in the case studies for this study.

The concept of diffusion has been applied in the literature in studies of policy transfer and it has been defined as "the process in which an innovation is communicated

through certain channels over time among the members of a social system" (Rogers 2003, p. 5). The diffusion of innovations occur after the innovation has been created and implemented somewhere else (Kvam and Straete 2010). In Whistler the innovation (the Whistler Model) has been implemented and is being adapted and transferred through the WCS.

Rogers (1995) states that there are four main factors that affect the diffusion of innovations: the nature of the innovation; communication channels; time; and, social system. The nature of the innovation includes the relative advantage, compatibility, complexity, trialability, and observability of the innovation. Communication channels are how information is communicated and transferred. Time includes how long it takes to implement an innovation, when the innovation is adopted (early versus later adopters), and, rate of innovation adoption. The social system includes norms of diffusion, how innovation decisions are made, and roles of different individuals in the decision making process. The transfer of the ICSP concept from Whistler through the WCS is an innovation that is highly compatible to the original model, of medium complexity, and highly observable because of Whistler's reputation and it is a working, living model. The WCS is the communication channel to transfer the innovation. The time frame is relatively short for the ICSP to be created and implemented because the WCS is present to facilitate and provide the proper tools.

5.5.2. Degree of Transfer

The degree of transfer of the resort municipality's ICSPs from working with the WCS can be assessed by examining their level of adaptation based on Dolowitz and Marsh's (2000) categories: copy; emulate; combine; and, inspire (Figure 5.1). This transfer is categorized as emulation because the ICSP is not a complete copy of the *Whistler2020* but is an adaptation to the circumstances of the new setting. It was noted in one of the interviews in Whistler that the adaptations are purposefully made by the WCS and the community in order to "resonate with the community more" (W3). This level of adaptation was identified in the document analysis of the ICSPs, in particular in the sections of: strategy areas; initial recommended actions; indicators and monitoring; targets; and, vision. The descriptions of success for the strategy areas are tailored to the specific resort municipality. It highlights how the different priorities and issues for each

community are directly addressed. Very few of the recommended actions are the same between the ICSPs for each of the five resort municipalities and some of the actions refer to specific places or organizations. The strength and type of the Green House Gas (GHG) targets also vary largely. The vision statements are similar in terms of wording and categorization however they are highly adapted to the resort municipality with the inclusion of specific geographical features and the resort municipality's name. Some sections of the ICSPs are very similar or the same, such as in the general structure (order and format) of the document, background information in the documents introductory section, and next steps. Overall there are sections with high levels of adaptation; therefore the ICSPs can be classified as an "emulation transfer".

5.5.3. Motivations

There are pressures on resort municipalities from the provincial government to take part in the ICSP Quick Start process with the WCS. One interview (W3) specifically mentioned one of these pressures were in the form of the Gas Tax Agreement in British Columbia that distributes funding to municipalities. The Agreement was signed in 2005 and the program began in 2007. In order to receive funding a municipality must integrate sustainability principles into all forms of municipal planning. The ICSP is one way to integrate sustainability principles into all forms of municipal planning. To incorporate sustainability, municipalities needed to include targets, policies, and actions for reducing GHG emissions within their OCPs. These targets can be non-binding targets or specific GHG targets (intention versus potential of the community). At the time, the ICSP was considered the best practice to create and include targets, policies, and actions for reducing GHG emissions into a community's policies and integrate into an OCP. The funding from the Gas Tax Agreement can be used for capital and planning projects. Small municipalities such as Harrison Hot Springs tend to face large infrastructure and funding deficits because of their small tax base. Therefore there was a large incentive for the resort municipalities to partake in the ICSP Quick Start program because of the funding opportunities created by the Gas Tax Agreement. There was also the added incentive that 50 percent of five ICSPs developed with the WCS for resort municipalities would be funded by the Green Municipal Fund. The funding opportunities created by the Gas Tax Agreement and the funding provided by the Green Municipal Fund were major

motivations for the five resort municipalities to partake in the ICSP Quick Start process with the WCS.

Additional broad motivators for the resort municipalities to work with the WCS to develop ICSPs were likely that the nature of tourism based communities links them to the increasing interest in sustainability by the public and tourism industry (Hjalager 2000). This has led to decision makers in these communities being faced with relatively “new” situations where there is a demand for sustainability within tourism but there is no current policy to effectively respond to it. This has resulted in decision makers being uncertain as to how to respond and policy transfer being an important tool to solve the issue (Stone 1999). This type of situation with a need being identified, in this case a need for sustainability in a tourism destination, tends to result in a response which is an innovation which could be the result of a policy transfer (Macchiavelli 2009).

Cooperation and competition are also two important motivators and conditions in tourist destinations behind the motivation to implement innovations (Clydesdale 2007). Tourist destinations are continuously competing against each other to attract visitors, however, by working together they can also increase each other’s competitiveness against other destination operators, therefore cooperating to be competitive (Clydesdale 2007). In the case of Whistler, the interviewees indicated that the main motivation to share their innovations was not linked to increasing competitiveness, but instead the desire to spread sustainability for the benefit of all. This can also occur at the Resort Municipality Collaborative where the resort municipalities of British Columbia meet regularly to share best practices in order to benefit all of the members.

Akrich *et al.* (2002) identifies two different types of models to explain uptake of an innovation; the “diffusion model” and the “model of interestment”. The “model of interestment” most appropriately describes the transfer the ICSP through the WCS because the innovation (ICSP) is being spread by agents of transfer who were active participants in the development of the original innovation. To some extent there is also the “diffusion model” process occurring because innovations from Whistler are being spread through means other than the WCS due to its intrinsic properties. This was noted in one interview where an interviewee (W5) noted that they had seen direct extracts from the *Whistler2020* used by a resort in China. Therefore, both the “model of interestment”

and the “diffusion model” are present with the Whistler Model but the “model of interestment” best applies to the case studies used in this study where the WCS is playing the key role in the transfer.

5.5.4. Agents

The WCS can be considered a change agent in the transfer of innovations from Whistler to other locations. The definition of change agents are that they are “a public or private entity through which an innovation is distributed or made available to society at large” (Brown 1981, p. 50). The mandate of the WCS fits within this definition of change agent because the WCS is a non-profit organization that provides community sustainability planning as well as implementation services to local governments. The community sustainability planning and implementation is based on the learnings and development of the Whistler Model and the innovation being distributed in this case is the ICSP. Change agents have been considered to be one of the most important agents for innovation diffusion and implementation because of their influence based on status and authority (Dabphet *et al.* 2012). Opinion leaders also tend to be present along with change agents because opinion leaders are individuals that advocate certain opinions and become leaders within that area. This occurred in Whistler with the visit of Karl-Henrik Robèrt and the introduction of TNS, that in turn led to the emergence of other local opinion leaders supporting the sustainability initiative.

Networks (such as the provincial Resort Municipality Collaborative (RMC)) also play an important role in diffusing knowledge and innovation and have been described in the literature to be second to that of change agents and opinion leaders in their degree of influence (Stone 1999). These networks are important for transferring policy through the sharing of information (Wolman and Page 2002). Policy transfer networks also tend to be *ad hoc*, limited in size, and biased with the policy information shared within the network (Evans and Davis 1999). These networks however allow for access to knowledge resources and other networks that otherwise would be inaccessible (Evans and Davis 1999). This is the case with the RMC which is limited in size to the 14 resort municipalities in British Columbia. The RMC meets regularly and provides the opportunity for best practices to be shared in order to strengthen tourism development within all the resort municipalities in British Columbia. Although this sharing may result in

a level of bias, because of the strong similarities between the resort municipalities it is more likely to lead to appropriate policy transfer.

5.5.5. *Transfer Issues*

As described earlier, Whistler is a central innovator due to its status and reputation, but this can lead to the inappropriate transfer of policy. In the case of Whistler and the transfer of the Whistler Model to resort municipalities in British Columbia, it appears that this inappropriate transfer has been somewhat avoided. This is because as outlined by Dolowitz and Marsh (2000), unsuccessful policy transfer is more likely to have occurred if the transfer is uniformed, incomplete or inappropriate, or if the policy being transferred is inappropriate to the new setting. The WCS ensures that the policy being transferred (the ICSP) is well informed through the process of education and public engagement. The transfer of the ICSP is also very complete in that it is an entire process and is a thorough, broad document that is created. It also tends to be appropriate in that the transfer is to resort municipalities that are similar in being tourism centered municipalities located in a relatively similar area (British Columbia) which means they face some of the same issues including the same tax and jurisdictional benefits. However, it is important to note that concerns have been raised in the literature about the issues of recommended policies or strategies that inherently involve an amount of opportunism and selection bias (Mossberger and Wolman 2003; Peck 2011). Recommended policies also bound searches for policy solutions (Mossberger and Wolman 2003). This bounded search is likely to have occurred with the WCS transfer of the Whistler Model to other resort municipalities because the WCS received funding through the Federation of Canadian Municipalities, called the Green Municipal Fund that funded 50 percent of five ICSPs for resort municipalities in British Columbia. Therefore when the WCS contacted the resort municipalities for interest in partaking and utilizing the funding, this constrained the resort municipalities' searches. However, the resort municipalities were not necessarily at the time searching for an ICSP process or something similar, and therefore there was no search to be bounded.

5.6. Transfer from Whistler to Harrison Hot Springs

For this study the transfer of the Whistler Model innovation in the form of the ICSP through the WCS to Harrison Hot Springs was examined in more depth through interviews. This allowed for the framework of the cycle of policy transfer developed from the literature review to be applied to the case studies of transfer from Whistler and within Harrison Hot Springs (Figure 5.2). What occurred in Harrison Hot Springs was compared to the framework. From this comparison it was found that there was no search for policies or information, similar to that of the policy problems in other locations. This bounded search came about because the agent of transfer (WCS), contacted Harrison Hot Springs and the other resort municipalities as described earlier. Harrison Hot Springs did not assess alternative options to that of working with the WCS and simply decided based on existing information to partake in the ICSP process with the WCS. Figure 5.2 shows the policy cycle altered in order to more appropriately represent what occurred during the transfer process. Even though a search for alternatives by Harrison Hot Springs did not take place, the rest of the cycle conformed to the model, notably: conditions that required more sustainable policies; assessment of relevant information to make a decision on what to adopt; the development of a policy (conceptualize, plan, and adopt); the implementation of the policy; and, monitoring and assessing whether the policy was successful.

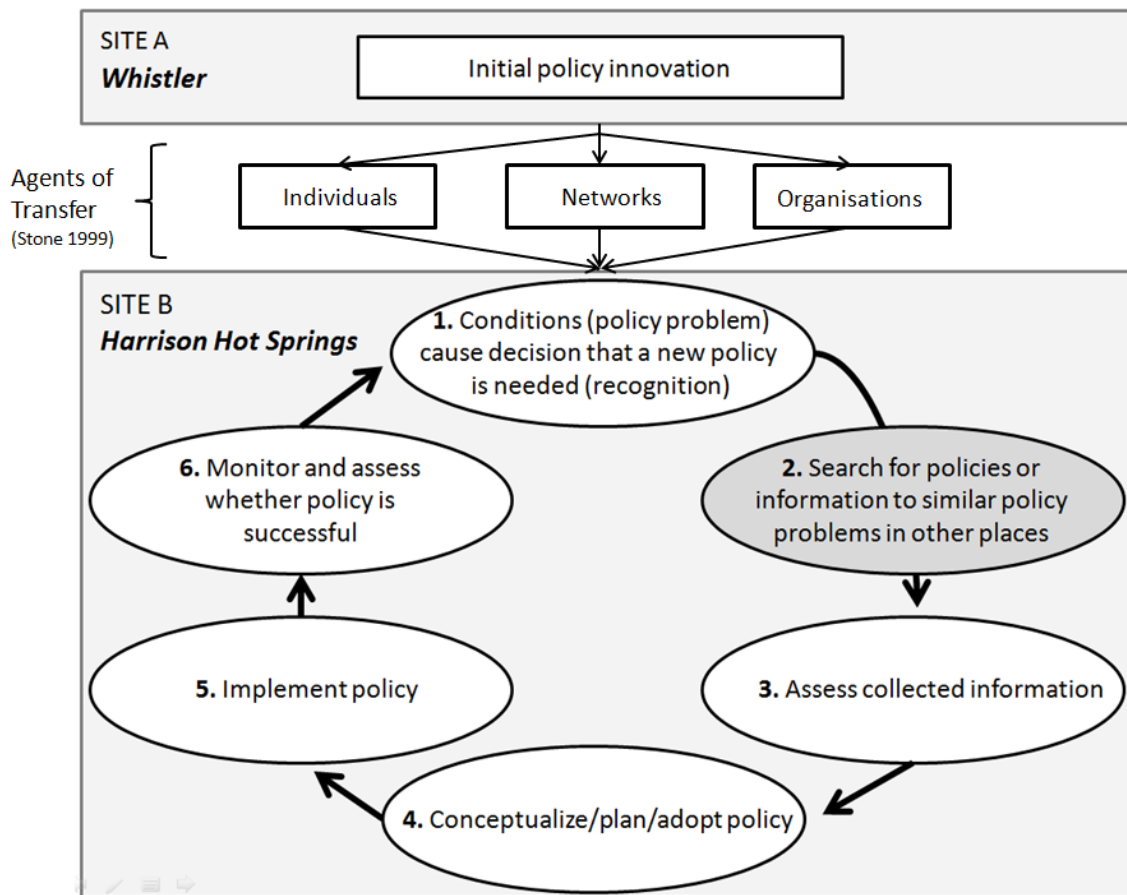


Figure 5.2. Policy transfer cycle from Whistler to Harrison Hot Springs

5.6.1. Transfer Process

All three types of policy transfer agents (individuals, networks, and organizations) were involved in how the ICSP process came about in Harrison Hot Springs. However, the most critical agent of transfer was an individual, one champion/opinion leader within the community that was noted in all the Harrison Hot Springs interviews, the Economic Development Officer of Harrison Hot Springs. The Economic Development Officer brought the possibility of an ICSP process to council and advocated for it. He was the one main champion (opinion leader) advocating for the Quick Start program. The Economic Development Officer could also be described as a policy entrepreneur because as Mintrom (1997) observes, they are "people who seek to initiate dynamic policy change" (p. 739) and who are "political actors who promote policy ideas" (p. 738). Policy entrepreneurs have been noted in the literature (Mintrom 1997; Mintrom and

Vergari 1998) to play an important role in promoting policy ideas, diffusion of innovation and setting of innovations on government agendas, as was the case in Harrison Hot Springs. Even with a champion or policy entrepreneur present there is still a decision making process that takes place when deciding whether to adopt a policy. Mossberger and Wolman (2003) proposed the following criteria for assessing a potential policy to be transferred; similarity of problems and goals, policy performance, and difference in setting. Differences in setting include political, social, economic institutions, political culture, available resources, public opinion, and other policies. Although Harrison Hot Springs did not specifically or formally use the Mossberger and Wolman (2003) assessment criteria, the criteria were inevitably used to some extent. It is not difficult to assess for policy performance for this case study because one of the advantages of the WCS and the Quick Start process is that the *Whistler2020* model is an ongoing, live example where successes and issues can be studied. The *Whistler2020*'s success can be seen in its longevity through its integration and amount of transfer and the attention it receives. For the assessment of difference in setting between Whistler and Harrison Hot Springs some aspects of this have been noted earlier, Harrison Hot Springs and Whistler have similarities in that they are both resort municipality destinations within British Columbia. The communities of Harrison Hot Springs and Whistler both care strongly about the protection of the environment for the same reasons. They are tourism-based economies that rely on the beauty and the environment entirely for the experience and attraction of tourists. Interviewees both in Harrison Hot Springs and Whistler noted this link between tourism and environment. Harrison Hot Springs is considerably smaller in physical size and available resources than Whistler, with the latter having established itself as a successful year-round destination. Harrison Hot Springs is based around the hot springs and the historic Harrison Hot Springs Resort. They also both have a high proportion of second home owners within their communities.

According to Wolman and Page (2002) local authorities have found it useful to look to other local authorities for information and solutions in order to avoid “reinventing the wheel”. However, some places have felt that their areas are unique, thus considering the experiences of other local authority’s experiences to be irrelevant to them. The questioning of relevance, particularly in relation to differences in resource availability and size of community, was brought up in a number of the interviews in Harrison Hot

Springs. However, local authorities tend to have more similarities because they tend to be in competition with each other for similar funds and are more aware of their competitors (Wolman and Page 2002). It also tends to be easier for locations within the same region to obtain information and assess the information about the innovation (Wolman and Page 2002). It is important to note that although Whistler has been highly successful, other tourism focused municipalities in British Columbia do not necessarily want to become 'another Whistler' in terms of such characteristics as size or style. This concern was expressed by respondents in Harrison Hot Springs and has also been heard in Whistler from other communities. This desire to be different is positive because competitively, tourism communities all need their own niches, particularly when they are within the same regional area. This desire for difference also contributes to the uneven adoption of a policy or parts of a policy resulting in, as mentioned by Peck and Theodore (2010), the constant production of uneven spatial developments. There are many differences and similarities between Harrison Hot Springs and Whistler as outlined earlier, however this did not inhibit Harrison Hot Springs working with the WCS.

5.6.2. Consequences

Rogers (1995) proposed that innovations can have three different types of consequences; desirable versus undesirable, direct versus indirect, and anticipated versus unanticipated (Rogers 1995). Innovations are most often implemented when the consequences are expected to be desirable, direct, and anticipated (Rogers 1995). For this study in the case of Harrison Hot Springs, it appears that the consequences of participating in the Quick Start process and implementing the ICSP were desirable, direct and indirect, as well as anticipated. The anticipated results from the implementation of and ICSP process ranged within the Harrison Hot Springs community. Certain Community Sustainability Action Team (CSAT) members walking away from the ICSP process exemplified these unmet expectations. However, based on the interviews, it appears the ICSP met most stakeholder expectations. These expectations were that the ICSP would be an overarching sustainability, guidance document for the municipality. Consequences were both direct and indirect in that the ICSP indirectly influences the decisions made by council but it also directly resulted in the creation of the Sustainable Criteria Process to assess proposed developments in the community.

Whether the consequences were anticipated or unanticipated are difficult to assess based on the interviews other than it seemed that expectations varied and the ICSP with time will eventually be integrated into the Harrison Hot Springs' Official Community Plan (OCP).

The Harrison Hot Springs ICSP can be conceptualized as an innovation and as successful because the ICSP is implemented and is being used even though it has not as yet been integrated into the OCP. It has been noted in the literature that an innovation is usually discontinued if not successful and thus far the ICSP is continually being used. Based on the interviews conducted for this study and using Dolowitz and Marsh's (2000) definition of success of a policy, the ICSP policy transfer to Harrison Hot Springs from Whistler is perceived as successful by the key actors in the community who were interviewed, and is therefore successful even though to date it may not have met all of its aims. More specifically the outcome of the ICSP in Harrison Hot Springs thus far, as identified in the interviews, is that it has: created a discussion around sustainability; aided when applying for certain grants; and, given the community direction as a reference document when decision making. These outcomes based on Evans and Davies's (1999) categorization are primarily soft (that is, policy transfer is considered to involve ideas, attitudes, and concepts) as compared to hard (which involves programmes and implementation being transferred). It is important to note that while the ICSP is not used on a daily basis by municipal staff, interviewees did acknowledge that the ICSP was used regularly. In the Harrison Hot Springs ICSP the creation of task forces were outlined as part of the Next Steps chapter. Harrison Hot Springs did not create task forces and does not plan on doing so in the future. With Whistler having reconfigured their task force program into a sector-based model it is unlikely that Harrison Hot Springs will in the near future reconsider and implement task forces.

5.6.3. Obstacles

There are obstacles and issues in Harrison Hot Springs with respect to the ICSP process and implementation. The first is that the initial recommended actions outlined in the ICSP were assigned to three main organizations in the community; the Village (municipality), Chamber of Commerce, and Tourism Harrison. Many of the same people are involved in these three organizations and it was felt in the interviews that the burden

to follow through on all of these outlined actions was too large for so few organizations and people. This is linked to the problem of limited resources, including people to work on the ICSP type of work. There also is currently a lack of political will or passion for sustainability generally within the community and within certain community leadership positions. The current mayor and council in Harrison Hot Springs are focused on infrastructure development and updates. The largest barrier during the time that the ICSP was created in Harrison Hot Springs was described by one respondent (H5) to be at the municipal level with the lack of knowledge around sustainability. This barrier highlights the importance of education and learning for policy transfer to occur, particularly relating to sustainability. Another issue has been that because Harrison Hot Springs is a small town that requires certain updates in infrastructure, these updates will increase the GHG emissions overall for Harrison Hot Springs even though they are necessary to increase the safety and capacity of the village. For example, a new sewage plant has been built in Harrison Hot Springs that requires more electricity thus resulted in larger GHG emissions, but on the other hand it does produce cleaner water. Another example is that of putting in street lights which requires greater amounts of electricity use but increase safety.

One of the largest challenges in Harrison Hot Springs was linked to the level of engagement and buy-in within the community for the ICSP process. This likely led to the resulting lack of awareness and impacts of the ICSP. The level of engagement and buy-in, in Harrison Hot Springs was described in the interviews to be mixed, some stating that it was “more engaging than most projects” (H2). Using Hall’s (1993) categorization of the three types of outputs that can occur from policy transfer (first order, second order, and third order), the impact on Harrison Hot Springs was not third order because as one Harrison Hot Springs respondent stated “I don’t think it was something that had a huge impact on the psyche of the community” (H4). It does appear second order outputs from the ICSP did occur because there were small adjustments to the 'status quo'. To some extent second order outputs occurred because this involves policy instruments being changed. This level of impact and buy-in can be described as medium to low as compared to that of the high level of buy-in that was originally experienced in Whistler. Another outcome that was evident from the interviewees was that they seemed unaware of what had happened with the ICSP after it was created even though they had

participated in its development. This is in contrast to the situation in Whistler where there is still a high awareness in the community around *Whistler2020*. There was also a strong feeling of excitement described in Whistler when *Whistler2020* was being developed whereas in Harrison Hot Springs the same level of excitement and engagement was not described in the interviews. This could have been because in Whistler there was the feeling that they were doing something unique and new as compared to in Harrison Hot Springs who in a sense was not “inventing the wheel” for the first time. This suggests the level of buy-in or engagement within a community for a plan is linked to the level of impact the plan particularly in terms of implementation. This is crucial because plans require community support for various initiatives and supporting municipal staff to be elected that support the plans. Engagement and buy-in can require education for a community to understand what is being discussed and why it is important. The presence of a champion, opinion leader, or change agent is powerful and plays an important role in the introduction and gaining of support for an innovation. Harrison Hot Springs appeared to have only one main champion advocating for the Quick Start program as compared to Whistler where there were a number of champions for sustainability and *Whistler2020*.

5.6.4. Future

In the future Harrison Hot Springs plans on integrating the ICSP into its OCP during the next OCP update. Integrating the ICSP will ensure that it is not forgotten and is a part of realigning the current policies and decision making within the community towards sustainability. Harrison Hot Springs has not yet created a monitoring program for the indicators and initial recommended actions created in the ICSP however it is something that may eventually be implemented. Harrison Hot Springs currently is experiencing short-term obstacles relating to available resources and political will within the community. As suggested by Hjalager (2010), such obstacles may turn into motivators in the long run. For Harrison Hot Springs this could occur because of the impacts of climate change which require current investment and therefore is a short term economic obstacle, but in the long run could be a motivator and increase the innovativeness and innovation implementation within the community. The future of the ICSP in Harrison Hot Springs is that it will likely have an increased impact as it is

integrated into the OCP and there is a plan for follow-up from the WCS with Harrison Hot Springs that may lead to further developments.

5.7. Whistler Transferability

Whistler has become a central point for transfer of innovations regarding sustainable resort governance practices. Results from key informant interviews in both Harrison Hot Springs and Whistler along with document analyses show how the Whistler Model is highly transferrable and scalable. The Whistler Model can also be considered as being very mobile. The advantage of conceptualizing the Whistler Model in terms of mobility, rather than transferability, is that mobility is a more encompassing term. The research on policy mobility tends to take into account communication and the movement of people that has been enhanced through technology (Sheller and Urry 2006). Communication clearly had an important role in the transfer of the Whistler Model. The transfer of policy and knowledge from Whistler has created a pattern of policy innovation adoptions that can be considered to be policy diffusion, because diffusion is "any pattern of successive adoptions of a policy innovation" (Eyestone 1977, p. 441). The diffusion of policy from Whistler has resulted in a geographically uneven distribution of parts of the Whistler Model because as outlined by McCann (2011a), certain pre-conditions and resources are required for transfer to occur. Local characteristics also impact innovation or policy adoption because of the specific characteristics of the local people, social systems, and communication channels (Dabphet *et al.* 2012). In the case of Whistler, it is clear that the WCS and the Resort Municipality Collaborative were important channels of communication and that the regionally local resort municipalities were similar enough for successful policy transfer to occur. At the international scale, it was mentioned in one interview (W1) that the issue of looking at what communities in other countries are doing is not as useful because of the difference in systems and how things are regulated.

5.7.1. Constraints/ Resistance

There are constraints to the flexibility and transferability of the Whistler Model. Both Harrison Hot Springs and Whistler experienced levels of resistance and constraints around the creation and implementation of a sustainability model and plan. Benson and

Jordan (2012) categorize these types of constraints for policy transfer into: demand side; programmatic; contextual; and, application related. The demand side constraints refer to issues of policy makers being motivated to only follow the status quo rather than go beyond it unless there is a large policy failure or global economic crisis. This demand side constraint was identified as being present in Harrison Hot Springs where one respondent stated that the current mayor and council are currently mainly focused on infrastructure. Programmatic constraints refer to a policy's specific characteristics, which make it more easily introduced. The ICSP has been described as highly transferrable and scalable which suggests that, along with the facilitation offered by the WCS, it has the characteristics that make it more easily introduced. Contextual constraints encompass factors such as the historical background, level of path dependency, political context, institutional structure density, and level of cultural and ideological compatibility (Benson and Jordan 2011). Application restraints include issues around the implementation of a policy such as transaction costs and scale of change required. All of these constraints were present during the transfer of the Whistler Model to Harrison Hot Springs, and likely during the transfer to the other resort municipalities, but the key is the degree of constraints present. The three most important constraints and issues identified in this study, discussed further below are: political system; engagement; and, implementation.

5.7.2. Political System

The current political and typical governance system is not adept at effectively incorporating the sustainability concept. Issues around the initial implementation of sustainability based systems or concepts into governance and policy is difficult due to path dependency, however, other difficulties also exist once sustainability has been incorporated. These problems were noted in many of the interviews from this study.

One problem is the short-term nature and volatile interests of politicians in municipalities where elections for mayor and council occur every three years. Sustainability requires long term vision and commitment that is problematic when incorporated at the political and governance level. Sustainability has also been a popular and trendy topic, which has aided its diffusion and incorporation into governance systems. However, there are longevity issues with sustainability approaches in

governance particularly if the sustainability plan, model, approach, or framework is not embedded into the governance system and policies. In the case of Whistler where the *Whistler2020* is highly integrated, even as elected officials and their priorities have changed over time, the *Whistler2020* has stayed intact. Embedding requires integration, such as with the ICSPs, into the communities' OCPs. This integration of sustainability policy makes neglect more difficult as it would be with simply a reference document, such as an ICSP. As mentioned in one interview, another issue around the short term nature of elected politicians is that councils tend to not want to put their energy into continuing a previous council's projects. Therefore it tends to be the non-elected municipal staff who create the longevity for projects and institutional knowledge. Path dependency within municipalities is also an obstacle to policy transfer and sustainability. It has been noted previously in the literature (McCann 2011a; Peck and Theodore 2010; Peck 2011), that the legacies that are embedded in institutions tend to constrain policy mobility and this creates a situation where agents are not fully rational, nor do they perform unconstrained, volunteeristic searches for new policies. This situation was clearly seen within the case study of Harrison Hot Springs where a full unconstrained scan for new policies with an objective lens did not occur. The goals of municipal staff and officials have a significant influence on policy transfer and the longevity of a plan, model, approach, or framework within governance. Policy makers, who are the main actors in policy transfer, have been noted by Graham *et al.* (2008) to be considered to have two types of goals; political or policy. Political goals include re-election or reappointment, power control, and maintaining legitimacy (by adopting policies recommended by powerful leaders). Policy goals tend to be to adopt new policies and update old policy. Elected municipal staff tend to be more focused on political goals whereas non-elected staff do not need to worry to the same extent about public opinion in terms of being elected to their position. It is also inevitable that to some extent all policy makers and municipal offices have preferences and biases based on their individual experiences and opinions (Graham *et al.* 2008). Therefore, in order to create longevity for a plan, model, approach, or framework within governance, it needs to be made as apolitical as possible and integrated in such a way that protects it from the issues outlined here around the political nature of municipal governance.

The WCS is an example of making part of the Whistler Model apolitical because it was created as a separate entity from the RMOW. This allowed the WCS to work at arm's length from the RMOW and transfer information and lessons from Whistler to other places. The WCS also conducts the monitoring program as part of the *Whistler2020* initiative, which also potentially is less biased than if it was done by the municipality. because it has the advantage of portraying the results in an apolitical manner. However, the WCS is not completely free from the nature of politics because it is affected by the projects (and funds) it is contracted to do by the Resort Municipality of Whistler (RMOW) which is strongly influenced by the political nature of municipal officials.

5.7.3. Engagement

The Whistler Model is continually changing and adapting as conditions change. The most pronounced of these changes is the change in mayor and council in Whistler as well as the reconfiguration of task forces into a sector-based model which can be connected to some degree to exhaustion and decrease in interest by the community in sustainability and the *Whistler2020*. This decrease in community interest was seen in response to Mayor Ken Melamed's campaign strategy for mayor (running for his third consecutive term). He campaigned on a platform that supported, continuation of the *Whistler2020* plan, but he lost in the last election. Since 2012 the WCS has continued to do the monitoring for RMOW but they are currently not conducting any action planning or engagement. Explanations to the cause of this shift in interest in the community away from *Whistler2020* as a central, political focus was suggested in one interview to be as a result of engagement fatigue. This engagement fatigue may have occurred due to the high level of engagement and lack of turnover in members of the task forces. One interviewee suggested that the solution to avoid engagement fatigue would be to continually keep changing and being innovative in order to keep the public's interest. Engagement is an important part of fostering a sense of ownership and to create social capital in a community. It also aids in conditioning the community to be more receptive to new ideas or policies. The high level of engagement is one of the characteristics of the Whistler Model most noted in the interviews as being important. The high level of engagement of the *Whistler2020* was also directly connected by one respondent to be crucial for the "sense of ownership" felt by the Whistler community for the *Whistler2020*.

The development of the *Whistler2020* involved a high level of community engagement because the process was designed and set up for community engagement. Engagement is therefore crucial for the longevity as well as the degree of success for a plan, model, approach, or framework.

5.7.4. Implementation

The creation and presence of a plan, such as an ICSP, has little impact unless it is implemented. Implementation can be problematic due to a number of different factors. The deterrents outlined for innovation implementation by Mohr (1969) include: cost (time, skills, and materials); ideologies; fear of consequences; lack of information; narrow organizational goals; decision structures; and, competence. This list overlaps with the list by Dolowitz and Marsh (1996) for constraints for policy transfer: path dependency; structural and institutional impediments; ideological incompatibility; and, lack of resource availability (technological, political, economic, and bureaucratic). Many of these deterrents were present in the case of the transfer from Whistler to Harrison Hot Springs. Harrison Hot Springs has limited resources in terms of time and personnel to implement the initial recommended actions as outlined by the ICSP. The ideologies were also described earlier as one of the biggest obstacles perceived by one respondent in Harrison Hot Springs when determining whether to work with the WCS to create an ICSP. The fear of consequences was likely present particularly for the municipal officials and staff when deciding to do the ICSP as well as currently when implementing the ICSP. Lack of information, narrow organizational goals, decision structures, and competence around sustainability, are all also likely to be present as barriers to implementation in Harrison Hot Springs. Although Harrison Hot Springs has not yet fully implemented their ICSP by integrating it into their OCP, they have plans to do so.

5.8. Governance and Sustainability

Innovation in policy and governance is particularly important even though in the past technological innovation has been the focus of most research (Nordin 2003). Governance that is effective and tailored is a central part of the implementation of sustainable tourism (Bramwell and Lane 2011). This is because governance provides

direction in a community, allows for democratic decision-making, and offers "the means to make practical progress" (Bramwell and Lane 2011, p. 411). Governance is a broader term than government because it includes the non-formal agencies of government that play a role in governance tasks (Bramwell and Lane 2011; Goodwin and Painter 1996). These non-formal agencies or non-state actors include actors in community, business, and voluntary sectors (Bramwell and Lane 2011). There are many mechanisms for regulating and mobilizing action in the governance of tourism that include: established practices; decision-making rules; and, institutions (Bramwell and Lane 2011; Hall 2011). Therefore, innovations in governance, such as seen with the Whistler Model, are what lead to the implementation of sustainability and change at a larger scale.

Policies such as the ICSP play an important role because they contain within them tools that are meant to motivate populations and agencies to make decisions that adhere to policy objectives (Schneider and Ingram 1988). These tools include; enabling (resources provided to create capacity); prescription (orders); incentives (payoffs); and, deterrence (a negative incentive) (Schneider and Ingram 1988). Other more specific tools include: mandates, licenses, grants, standards, vouchers, and taxation (Schneider and Ingram 1988). The design of policy is made up of three basic elements which are interconnected: agents, purposes or goals, and targets (Schneider and Ingram 1988). Agents are defined as "officials assigned responsibilities by policy documents as well as others who may have assumed responsibilities in relation to the policy" (Schneider and Ingram 1988, p. 71). Goals are found through official documents, interviews, policy analysis, or reasoning of the policies ends or means (Schneider and Ingram 1988). Goals range and are not always measurable, achievable, clear, immediate, short term, or consistent (Schneider and Ingram 1988). Inconsistent goals must balance the various views and interests that are conflicting (Schneider and Ingram 1988). Target populations are defined as "groups or individuals whose decisions and behavior are related to policy goals directly or indirectly" (Schneider and Ingram 1988, p. 70). These elements of policy design (agents, purposes or goals, and targets) are important to understand because they outline what policy makers are looking for when designing and considering policy transfer.

There is debate in the literature of whether policy mobility and transfer is a driver of best-practice, global convergence, and creating "races to the bottom/top" (Peck and

Theodore 2010). Policy transfer is likely to have played a role in both the positive and the negative processes just mentioned, however focus should be placed on how policy transfer can be channeled in the future to implement positive change. This channeling of policy transfer towards a more positive and efficient move towards sustainability is seen in this study's case studies where innovative sustainability policy was effectively transferred.

6. Conclusions

One of the most important moves towards sustainable tourism is through the transfer of policies and governance towards sustainability. Policies and governance give direction to communities and facilitate the implementation of further sustainability initiatives. This study identified Whistler as having an innovative governance approach, called the Whistler Model, because of the combination of approaches and techniques it uses. Whistler can be conceptualized as a central innovator from where policies are diffused because of its role and reputation. For policy transfer the reputation of a policy or place is in many ways has a larger impact than the reality of how the policy or place is doing because it is the reputation that affects whether a policy will be transferred to a new place. Very often decision makers are aware of the reputation but are not privy to or have the extent of knowledge or access to enough information to know the actual reality. Whistler is looked to by many communities within British Columbia and internationally for best practices particularly relating to sustainability. Based on the case study results the Whistler Model can be considered to be flexible and transferable. These results were from key informant interviews and a document analysis of Integrated Community Sustainability Plans from five resort municipalities working with the Whistler Centre for Sustainability.

Although the Whistler Model was found to be transferrable and adaptable there are issues with the implementation of the Integrated Community Sustainability Plan. For example, Harrison Hot Springs has not yet fully implemented its Integrated Community Sustainability Plan by integrating it into their Official Community Plan, although they plan to do so. Harrison Hot Springs faced challenges with long-term community engagement and buy-in. General education on sustainability was also a challenge and seen as being an important factor in maintaining and acquiring community engagement and buy-in. There were also constraints mainly around the inherent issues with the political system. Politicians tend to focus on economic issues and short-term solutions to ensure re-election. This results in large issues such as sustainability and climate change, which

require long-term sustained action, to be neglected. There is also the challenge of path dependence, which makes the introduction of innovations difficult and requires certain conditions to be present for path creation to occur. Sustainable principles and practices need to be integrated into governance in order to prevent it from being a concept only used when politicians who actively support and campaign for sustainability are in power. This necessary integration of sustainability principles in governance can be accomplished through the incorporation of sustainability into high-level policy documents such as Official Community Plan amendments and the introduction of Integrated Community Sustainability Plans. Incorporating the concept of sustainability into these documents makes the concept of sustainability more apolitical and therefore increases long-term effectiveness.

There is very little literature and research examining policy transfer at the local scale (Bulkeley 2006; Dolowitz and Marsh 2000; McCann 2011a; Temenos and McCann 2011; Wolman and Page 2002) and also innovation within the tourism context (Kvam and Straete 2010; Schumpeter 1934). This study addressed these research gaps, however, further studies are needed in these areas. Bringing together these different concepts and bodies of research (policy mobility, policy transfer, and innovation) will strengthen the understandings currently held in the literature and create new understandings. A focus should also be put on sustainability-related policy and governance because of the need internationally for policy and governance that integrates sustainability principles. These new or transferred policies with sustainability integrated into them will aid places in facing the massive challenges such as environmental issues and economic volatility being experienced. In particular the process of transfer and factors involved should be examined to better understand the complex process of policy transfer. Further case studies at the local scale should be used in order to better understand the intricacies and barriers involved in policy transfer.

This study highlights the factors and importance of the transfer of policies and governance towards sustainability. It also shows how an innovative model developed and was transferred to similar resort settings. It is hoped that this study will direct and encourage further research within local scale policy transfer with respect to sustainability in order to further the current limited understandings in this area.

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Appendices

Appendix 2.

Interview Protocol

Resort Municipality of Whistler

- How did the Whistler Model come about (circumstances and motivations) and what were the influences?
- What is the Whistler Model and what makes it innovative, unique, and scalable?
- What is the role of the WCS in creating and disseminating the Whistler Model?
- Who are the main players/actors in creating and affecting the Whistler Model?
- What makes the Whistler Model transferable to other places?
- Is the Whistler Model idea being picked up outside of BC?

Whistler Centre for Sustainability

- What was the rationale behind creating the WCS?
- How does the WCS find clients, who are their targets, what are they trying to diffuse (Whistler Model)?
- Why was the WCS made independent from the municipality?
- Where does the funding for WCS come from? Issues around this?
- What is unique(different) about the WCS? What are the main/defining characteristics of the WCS that distinguish it?
- What is the role of the WCS in creating and disseminating the Whistler Model?
- How are the task forces working?
- How long is the Quick Start process? How flexible is the amount of time it takes? Number of meetings it involves?
- How much of the Quick Start process is TNS?
- Is there follow up and funding available for resort municipalities with ICSPs?
- Is the Whistler Model idea being picked up outside of BC?
- Why and how did it come about (circumstances/condition) that Harrison worked with the WCS to develop their ICSP?
- Who are the main players/actors in Harrison?

- How are members of CSAT chosen? Why does the CSAT number of members vary so much?

Harrison Hot Springs

- What were the previous sustainability plans or moves towards sustainability before working with the WCS to develop the ICSP?
- Was there any prior work or reference with Whistler to working with the WCS to create Harrison's ICSP?
- Why and how did it come about (circumstances/condition) that Harrison worked with the WCS? Were there any barriers or constraints? Were other options considered other than working with the WCS?
- What was new to the community that was brought by working with the WCS?
- How long did it take Harrison to complete the Quick Start process? Number of meetings?
- Where did the funding come from for Harrison to create their ICSP?
- Who are/were the main players/actors within Harrison? How were CSAT members chosen?
- Has the ICSP been helpful in achieving the goals that the municipality was hoping it would fulfill?
- Were task forces created as outlined in the Next Steps portion of the ICSP, and if yes, what are the future plans for using the task forces? funding? issues?
- Is Harrison achieving their initial recommended actions towards their vision and sustainability as noted in the ICSP? Is Harrison on track for meeting targets (GHG)?
- How successful has the ICSP been for moving towards sustainability? What were the short term and long term impacts to Harrison (e.g. tourism, community)? Were these consequences desirable or undesirable? direct or indirect? anticipated or unanticipated?
- What new policy or OCP adaptations have been transferred from WCS and resulting from the ICSP?

Acronyms

ICSP- Integrated Community Sustainability Plan

WCS- Whistler Centre for Sustainability

Whistler Model- Sustainability approach to governance (Whistler2020)

TNS- The Natural Step

Appendix 3.

Table of sustainability priority vision statements from each resort municipality's Integrated Community Sustainability Plan (ICSP)

Community	Category	Vision
Fernie	Environment	Through protecting the environment, in the year 2030, Fernie continues to prioritize and protect the beautiful natural surroundings in which it is situated, in particular the Elk River valley, surrounding mountains and environmentally sensitive areas.
	Economy	Through ensuring economic viability, in the year 2030, Fernie's economy is diverse and mainly locally-based, with a diverse workforce.
	Community	Through enriching community life, in the year 2030, the community of Fernie is healthy, safe, vibrant, diverse and happy.
Harrison Hot Springs	Environment	By 2030, Harrison Hot Springs continues to prioritize and protect the beautiful natural surroundings in which they are situated, in particular Harrison Lake, scenic assets and environmentally sensitive areas.
	Economy	By 2030, Harrison's economy is diverse and supported by local residents and visitors alike.
	Community	By 2030, the community of Harrison Hot Springs is healthy, vibrant, and diverse, with a strong sense of place and high quality of life.
	Visitor Experience	By 2030, the success of Harrison Hot Springs as a community has become intertwined with the success of its tourism offerings and experiences within the community and the region.
Invermere	Environment	Through protecting the environment, in the year 2030, Invermere and its neighbours in the Columbia Valley continue to prioritize and protect the beautiful natural surroundings in which they are situated, in particular Lake Windermere, the Columbia River Wetlands and environmentally sensitive areas.
	Economy	Through ensuring economic viability, in the year 2030, Invermere's economy is diverse and mainly locally-based, with a diverse workforce.
	Community	Through enriching community life, in the year 2030, the community of Invermere is healthy, vibrant, diverse and happy.
	Partnering for Success	Through partnering for success, in the year 2030, the success of Invermere as a community is intertwined with the success of its partners within the community and the Valley.

Community	Category	Vision
Kimberley	Community	By enriching community life, in the year 2025, Kimberley is an inclusive welcoming community with a strong sense of place and high quality of life.
	Economy	By ensuring economic viability, in the year 2025, Kimberley's economy is robust, and further diversified into learning, professional services, health, light industry and tourism.
	Environment	By protecting the environment, in the year 2025, Kimberley continues to value and ultimately protect the beautiful natural surroundings in which it is situated.
	Tourism Experience	By enhancing the tourism experience, in the year 2025, Kimberley has connected thousands of visitors with authentic and genuine Kimberley activities and local places.
	Partnering and Collaborating	By partnering and collaborating, in the year 2025, the success of Kimberley is dependent on rich partnerships and an inclusive collaborative approach to community decision making.
Osoyoos	Environment	Through protecting the environment, in the year 2030, Osoyoos continues to prioritize and protect the beautiful natural surroundings in which it is situated, in particular Osoyoos Lake, the surrounding desert habitat, and environmentally sensitive areas.
	Economy	Through ensuring economic viability, in the year 2030, Osoyoos' economy is diverse and mainly locally-based, with a diverse workforce.
	Community	Through enriching community life, in the year 2030, the community of Osoyoos is healthy, vibrant, diverse and happy.

Appendix 4.

List of participants involved in the Community Sustainability Action Plan (CSAT) created to aid in the development of each resort municipalities Integrated Community Sustainability Plan (ICSP)

Community	Organization Affiliation	Specific Position	# of people
Fernie	Whistler Centre for Sustainability	Senior Planner and Manager	1
	Fernie Campus, College of the Rockies and Leisure Services Advisory Committee	Campus Manager	1
	Wildsight	Southern Rockies Program Manager	1
	Municipality	Chief Administrative Officer	1
		Director of Operational Services	1
		Mayor	1
		Official Community Plan Implementation Committee	1
		Director of Planning	1
		Greenhouse Gas Emission Reduction Committee	1
		Advisory Planning Commission	1
	Fernie Alpine Resort	General Manager	1
	Fernie Chamber of Commerce	Representative	1
	Fernie Secondary School		2
	School District #5 and Leisure Services Advisory Committee	Board Chair	1
	Fernie Family Housing Society	Manager	1
	Teck Resources Ltd.	Communications Coordinator	1
Interior Health	Community Integrated Health Services Administrator	1	
Fernie Academy	Student	1	

Community	Organization Affiliation	Specific Position	# of people
	Tembec Forest Resource Management	Lands Supervisor	1
	Community-at-large		2
	Total		22
Harrison Hot Springs	Council Member	Mayor	1
		Councilor	2
		Manager of Planning and Community Services	1
	Harrison Hot Springs Chamber of Commerce	Director	1
	Tourism Harrison	Executive Director	1
	Harrison Festival Society		1
	Residents		7
	Student Representative		1
Total		15	
Invermere	Council Liaison	Mayor	1
	Council Liaison	Council Member	1
	David Thompson Secondary	Chef Instructor	1
	Family Resource Center	Executive Instructor	1
	WF Contracting	Owner/Contractor	1
	Municipality	Director of Development Services	1
	Child Protection and Adoption	Team Leader	1
	Invermere Valley Echo	Naturalist	1
	East Kootenay Addiction Services Society	Youth Addictions Officer	1
	Columbia Valley Chamber of Commerce	Executive Director	1
	Greenman Sustainable Buildings		1
	Panorama/Invermere's Destination Marketing		1
	Quiniscoe Homes		1

Community	Organization Affiliation	Specific Position	# of people
	Residents		4
	Total		17
Kimberley	Council Liaison	Mayor	1
	Staff Liaisons	Project Coordinator	1
		CSAT Member	1
		CSAT Member	1
	Chamber of Commerce Representative		1
	Tourism Kimberley		1
	Social, Health, Arts and Culture Kimberley Arts Council		1
	Environmental Organization Wildsight		1
	At-large members of the Public		9
	Total		17
Osoyoos	Municipality	Councilor	2
		Community Development Manager	1
		Planning and Development Services Director	1
	Chamber of Commerce	Vice President	1
	Destination Osoyoos	Executive Director	1
	Osoyoos & District Museum and Archives	Director	1
	McLean Construction	Owner	1
	Whistler Center for Sustainability	Liaison	1
	Residents		3
	Total		12