

INTRODUCTION

A Glimmer in the Eye: Planning for a New Northwest

Ethan Seltzer

What makes a region? For the last 100 years, the idea of “region” has taken several turns. To some, regions are distinguished from one another by those features that make them different and separate from all other regions. For others, regions are best defined by what they contribute to something larger, that “whole” of which they are a “region.” And for others still, regions are simply defined by the ways in which a large number of characteristics—including ecological, landscape, meteorological, economic, political, infrastructural, historical, cultural—overlap in particular places. We use the term in all kinds of ways.

In 2015, the American Planning Association is meeting in Seattle, in the region known by many as the Pacific Northwest, by others as Cascadia, by some as the northern temperate rainforest, and by others still as Salmon Nation. And that does not even begin to scratch the surface of how this part of North America has been dissected, bounded, described, and defined since it was once known by the fledgling United States simply as the “Oregon Territory.”

However, even these definitions fail to reflect other elements of this territory, namely that it is one of the oldest continually inhabited places on the continent. There is a record of human inhabitation here that goes back 12,000 years or more. Whatever we know as the Pacific Northwest is built on what the First Peoples of this place discovered over millennia of living here, trying things, failing, succeeding, and trying new things.

In the 19th century, settlers coming to what is now Oregon’s Willamette River Valley believed that these grassy bottomlands had been prepared for

them by God. Today we know that the Native American practice of burning the bottomlands to concentrate game in forest edges produced the Edenic landscape encountered by those early Anglo settlers.

So keep your eyes open as you read this book, and you will find examples of many of these region-defining principles at work in the Pacific Northwest today. History, economics, politics, culture, and landscape combine and recombine to present this place as distinct, connected, and more than the sum of the parts. In this regard, we are no different than any other corner of North America.

However, among our distinguishing characteristics is that we plan. This is a region born of planning, when planning was a great national endeavor. Just over 200 years ago, Lewis and Clark took their epic walk, their journey of discovery. The prevailing sense of the region at that time was that after cresting the Rockies, Lewis and Clark would encounter a gradual slope leading off to the shores of the Pacific. Not for the first time, grand plans hatched at a distance had to change drastically.

The use and development of the Columbia River itself spawned another ambitious, nation-scale planning effort as a means for lifting the region, then regarded as a dependent natural resource supplier for the humming economy emanating from eastern metropolises, out of the Great Depression. That planning led to capturing the energy of the Columbia, cumulatively equal to 40 percent of the total hydropower capacity of the nation in this one river system, for rural and urban electrification and the creation of new industries.

Although the lights went on and those new industries were established, as Lewis Mumford famously remarked in 1939, “. . . neither Portland nor Seattle show, from the standpoint of planning, more than metropolitan ambitions that have over-reached themselves. The melancholy plan to increase Portland’s population from 300,000 to three million succeeded in disordering and unfocusing its growth: but it did little to give it the benefit of modern city planning practice”

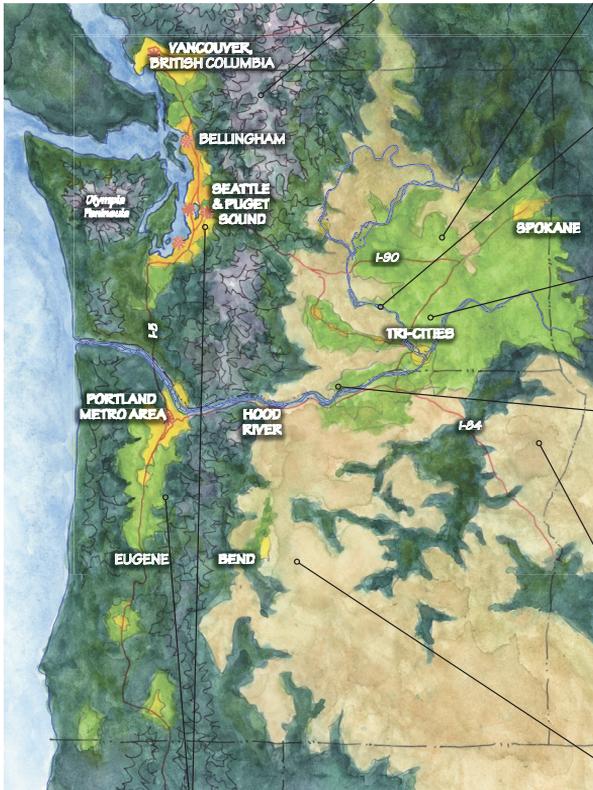
Despite the use of park plans by the Olmsted brothers in both cities, and occasional grasps for urban greatness, it was slow to arrive in the region. Although planning, as collective intentionality, was part of the development of the region from its start, it was not until the emergence of growth management and the environmental movement that this became a region that was looked to as a leader for planning and planning innovation. These stories and more are all reflected in the chapters that follow.

We undertook the production of this book with a desire to explore the regional roots for the planning here. We asked, “What, if anything, makes planning and its practice distinctive in the Pacific Northwest?” In essence, could we provide our audience of practicing planners, visiting this region on the occasion of the American Planning Association’s 2015 National Planning Conference, with

Cascadia Region Context & Challenges

The Cascade Mountains provide extensive natural resources & recreational opportunities— but they also are a “Cascade Curtain,” separating progressive & urban “coasties” from more conservative & rural eastern communities.

Thriving Vancouver B.C., Seattle/Tacoma & Portland metropolitan regions along the Cascade corridor, each with the challenges of addressing rapid growth & change.



Irrigation from Columbia River has made the area a breadbasket, providing fruit, wheat & wine.

Extensive wind turbines along with 14 hydroelectric dams on the Columbia River provide low cost alternative energy.

Nuclear cleanup at Hanford currently provides an economic base.

The mighty Columbia River runs 1,243 miles from its headwaters in Canada to the Pacific Ocean, forming the boundary between WA & OR

Significant areas of Oregon's basin shrub-steppe ecosystems east of the Cascades have been preserved after 20th century resource extraction pressure.

Central Oregon communities experience growth pressure from recreation-based economic boom.

Coast, southern & eastern areas in both states have high unemployment & few economic development opportunities.

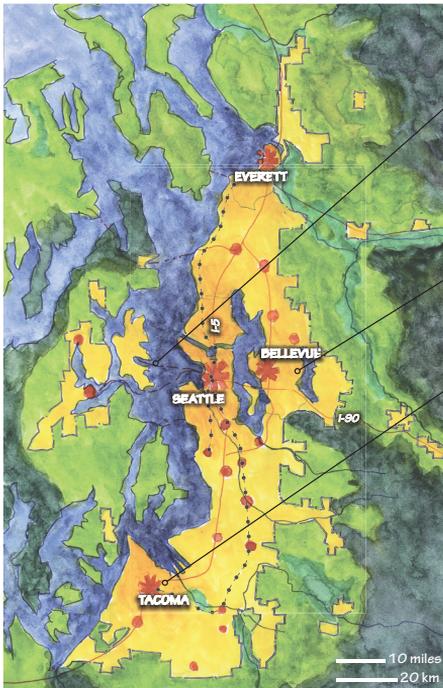
7 major volcanic peaks, including Mt. St. Helens & Mt. Hood, provide recreational uses & dramatic scenic beauty.

Federal land management has a strong presence in the region, including 14 national forests.

Puget Sound/ Willamette Valley ecosystems are under continuous development pressure - driven by strong I-5 & metro area economies.

Significant earthquake & tsunami threats along Pacific Coast create major planning challenges.

Loss of farmland has been slowed in Oregon but not in Washington.



Puget Sound Regional Council provides planning direction for the 4 county region.

Disparate urban counties are connected by floating bridges & ferries.

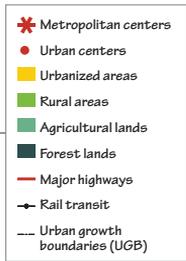
The region's historic economic base, shipping & timber products, is still reflected in the strength of the maritime activities, e.g., Ports, Navy, ship building.

High tech industries (e.g., Amazon, Microsoft) have gravitated to Downtown Seattle & the Bellevue-Redmond Corridor.

Puget Sound's industrial base (e.g., Boeing, shipping) is spread throughout the region.

The Cascade & Puget Sound region provides extensive & highly accessible outdoor recreation opportunities.

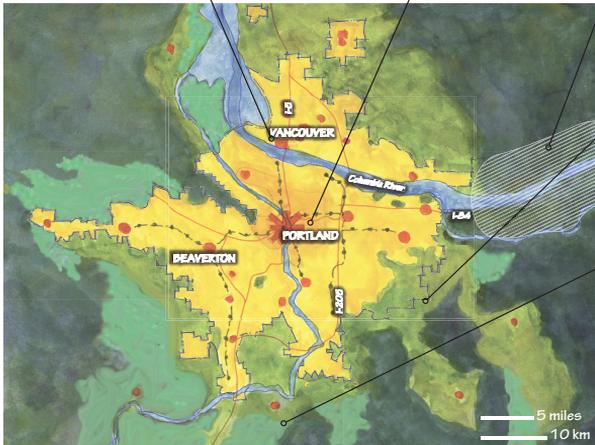
Link light rail & bus rapid transit systems are beginning to connect the region.



Vancouver WA—historically a bedroom community—is now developing a stronger economic base.

Older Portland neighborhoods are vibrant, mixed-use & pedestrian friendly, served by streetcar & frequent bus service.

Extensive & growing light rail transit system.



Coordinated bi-state & national planning protects the Columbia Gorge National Scenic Area

Urban & rural reserves provide areas for 50-year urban expansion & farm/forest protection.

Willamette River Valley is a productive agricultural region.

Metro Regional Government provides growth & development controls for cities & counties within UGB.

Planning the Pacific Northwest

a portrait of planning in the Pacific Northwest that illuminated the connections between what was seen, what was done, and the landscape it took place in?

Perhaps the fact that we, a group of planners, both practicing and academic, asked these questions is illuminating enough. After all, we ask about connections between landscape and planning because landscape means a lot to this region and the people who have chosen to make it their home. This is an abundant place in a diverse setting. Mountains, rivers, valleys, deserts, and ocean beaches, and yes, cities and suburbs and sprawl all characterize the place. You can take a day trip to the wilderness from an urban center here, and we work hard to make sure that that will always be the case.

We also think about the climate and our weather a lot. Like the number of words that the Eskimos have for “snow,” so, too, are we blessed with a lengthy list of words for “rain.” Get us started and it is hard to stop: drizzle, sunbreaks, rain, showers, mist, heavy fog, pineapple express, downpour, continuous precipitation, snow level, La Niña, El Niño, and the list goes on. Our planning occurs, rain or shine, conscious of the conditions outside. In this modern era, there is a place at the table here for the natural world, and the landscape keeps us honest.

There is also a place for the public. In Oregon, Goal One of the State-wide Planning Program is, intentionally, Citizen Involvement. In both Seattle and Portland, citizens expect to be involved, so much so that some believe that the process takes on a relentless life of its own. However, the fundamental notion that those affected by the planning ought to be actively engaged in making the plans is accepted. We assume, and often demand, access.

Planning theorists may propose that, on the one hand, planning is a process of social learning, and planners are engaged in ensuring the full and free flow of information and decisions. On the other, others would propose that planning is less about process, and more about outcomes.

Here in the Pacific Northwest, planning practice embraces both points of view. We are here to engage in a social learning process that collaboratively creates plans that we live by, and those plans are expected to improve the fit between people and the landscape and advance conditions of justice and sustainability in our society. It is both, not one or the other, and that, too, should be evident in what you read in the coming pages.

Finally, we expect to make change. We expect planning to make change. Planners, architects, landscape architects, and urban designers have all been deeply engaged in the major social movements of this region in the last 50 years. We are optimistic about what tomorrow will bring, a classic “western” perspective—born of the pioneer movement where moving west held the promise of a better life. We also like to believe that this optimism is born of pragmatism. As one of our regional Fortune 500 corporations likes to say, “Just Do It!” We believe that we should, we must, and we will.

All that said, we will be the first to tell you that you will have a tough time finding the definitive proof that planning in this region is different than planning in other regions. We tried to find it, but planning practice is both so contextual and, at the same time, borrows so heavily from practice in other places that the dividing line between what is authentically regional, and what is not, is hard to discern.

This book arose from a request made to planning practitioners and academics in the region to contribute articles that exemplified the art, practice, and outcomes of planning in Oregon and Washington. The chapters here emerged from that call for participation. However, know that there are more facets to planning in our region than are present here. We did not separately seek to fill gaps in the contents.

As a result, not all important planning work is captured by these articles. There is a dearth of social policy and equity work in this collection, and only a light mention of health-related planning. Planners in the Pacific Northwest are also working on pressing issues associated with urbanization and change, particularly with shifting demographics among youth, the elderly, immigrant communities, and growing diversity generally.

We face huge challenges in this region with public finance and the ability of local communities to meet basic service needs, quite apart from investing in the implementation of plans. New issues surrounding coal exports and oil trains, along with ocean planning and species recovery, make environmental planning an ongoing focal point for planner activity.

The collection does not illustrate any of the region's planning exports: involvement in the global arena—particularly urbanization in the Pacific Rim—which constitutes a loop of new intelligence and experiences that come back to influence policies and practices at home. Similarly, this is a collection with a profoundly urban and westward tilt: There are important and specific issues associated with the dry side of the Cascade Mountains, with planning on tribal lands, and with public lands that keep planners busy.

Consequently, although we set out to address broad questions about the nature of planning here, we worked with what we received and did not attempt to achieve a comprehensive, encyclopedic recitation of activity. That said, we still think this collection works well for our purposes.

Think of it like this. Looking for regional differences in planning styles is much like birding: You have to relax and look for the movement out of the corner of your eye to actually find what you're looking for. The chapters here are like birds flitting through the forest. Keep your eyes open and you will find plenty.

Here in the upper left edge of the continent, we're kind of beverage-crazy. Beer, wine, coffee, cider, boutique spirits . . . we do them all. Our advice: Grab your favorite beverage, read these chapters, and then draw your conclusions, just as we have.

Planning the Pacific Northwest

In fact, view this book as a bit of a map to that unmapped part of the continent that Lewis and Clark visited. We've organized your trip here using three distinct lenses: past, present, and future. In the first section, we trace the link between planning and the transition in this region from its historic timber and agricultural past to its high-tech and creative class present. In the second section, we present a series of chapters that help to explain our interest in being green, and more than that, our commitment to serving that green drive behind much of what we do.

In the third section we look to the future. What's next? Where will we see it first? How will it tackle the "wicked problems" we have left behind for the next generation of planners, activists, and decision makers?

We are proud to call ourselves planners and to be able to bring you this volume. We are committed to the art and practice, craft and profession, and vital role that planning is and plays in this region we believe in.

As some have proposed, planning is the "collective organization of hope." Planning is fundamentally a hopeful enterprise. We do it together, on behalf of real places with pressing needs and valuable, legitimate aspirations. Frankly, it's a privilege to be a planner in this region, and to be entrusted with working with our communities, big and little, toward these ends. We hope you, too, enjoy the journey.

CHAPTER 1

Eclectic Cascadia

Sheila Martin

A visitor to the Pacific Northwest might discover its multiple personalities by boarding an Amtrak train in Eugene, Oregon, and riding it north to Vancouver, British Columbia. The slow ride north offers an opportunity to read Cascadia's history, absorb its present, and contemplate its future while surveying the landscapes, the character of the cities and towns, and the people who inhabit them. Join me in a quick journey through this unique place via the narrative of one person's view. During our journey, we might ask, "What weaves these diverse people and places into the tapestry that we call Cascadia?" (Figure 1.1).

As we board the train in Eugene, we consider the characteristics of urban life and rural landscapes that unite Cascadia. The region's economic history is tied to its forests, mountains, seas, rivers, and valleys. The southern start of the Amtrak Cascades route is also the south end of the Willamette Valley. Defined by the river that emerges from the Calapooya Mountains near Eugene and flows to its confluence with the Columbia River, the Willamette Valley contains more than two-thirds of Oregon's population and nine of its 10 largest cities. The river feeds the fertile valley that sustained native peoples for over 10,000 years and attracted the early, mostly white, settlers of the 19th century. The mouth of the Columbia River was the site at which the Lewis and Clark Corps of Discovery sighted their destination, the Pacific Ocean, in 1805.

Today, the valley's agriculture includes the dominant grass seed and nursery industry, and the smaller growers that feed the region's foodie reputation. As we travel through the valley we find patches of berries, orchards of nuts and small fruits, fields of hops and vegetables, poultry and dairy farms, and many vineyards. Oregon's fruits and vegetables are grown on relatively small

farms—quite different from the massive tracts of wheat, silage corn, and soybeans of the Midwest. With a strong appreciation for this agricultural diversity and legacy, Oregon’s planning system has played a key role in preventing the rapid loss of farmland that has occurred in many other urbanizing places (Farmland Information Center 2014).

Arriving in Portland at Union Station, we emerge at the center of a region that has experienced a radical transformation since the 1980s: growth, prosperity, and redevelopment reshaped the city and the region from a backwater timber town to an edgy, progressive, and prosperous metropolis that attracts the young creative class from the Midwest and East, retiring baby boomers from California, and immigrants from all over to the technology businesses in the central city and the suburbs. While these groups are attracted by different amenities, they all experience a place that looks different from where they came. And they may understand that planning has a lot to do with it.

With a 2013 population of 592,000 (Population Research Center 2013), Portland is part of a seven-county metropolitan area of just over 2.2 million. Growing, thriving regions have long attracted young, smart people to begin their careers. Despite an economy subject to steep downturns and slow recoveries, Portland’s ability to draw and retain young creatives has exceeded expectations. (Jurjevich and Schrock 2012) These in-migrants have transformed parts of inner northeast and southeast Portland into enclaves of high educational attainment and income in neighborhoods that once were considered blighted. As we look around at the pubs, restaurants, unique retail, reliable transit, and bike lanes we understand the appeal.

Hop off at Union station and you can take light rail across the river to the east side of the city or off to its western suburbs, into downtown, or walk a short way into the Pearl District. The transformation of the district’s warehouses and a former 140-acre switching yard into a pedestrian-friendly area with upscale restaurants, bars, and retail, the nation’s largest independent bookstore, and a mix of upscale housing alongside affordable units demonstrates the power of urban renewal.

From the Pearl, you can grab the streetcar through a downtown that re-emerged earlier than many others in the United States. Short city blocks, bike lanes, transit options, a beautiful riverfront, food carts, coffee and bike shops, and tax-free shopping define downtown. Portland State University anchors the south end and serves the city as a source of knowledge, entertainment, and art. After a little downtown exploring of the south end, you hop on the Max Yellow or Green Line back to Union Station, ready to continue the Cascadia journey.

Cross the Columbia River and enter Vancouver, Washington, a Portland suburb with a distinct identity stemming from a different tax system, planning system, and a “we aren’t Portland” attitude that offers an alternative to the hipster lifestyle across the river. Washington State is bigger, richer, and more

famous than Oregon. With almost seven million in population, its economy includes big hitters like Boeing, Microsoft, and Amazon. Its planning system is less top-down than Oregon's, but the variation in its landscape and the contrasts between its urban and rural areas are similarly stark.

Following the Columbia

Traveling into northern Clark County, Washington, you're following the Columbia River that separates Oregon and Washington through a landscape that begins to feel rugged as Mount St. Helens—which lost 1,300 feet of height in its 1980 eruption—comes into view on the right, followed by Mount Rainier. While Washington has less total forestland than Oregon, its 21 million acres of forests represent about 50 percent of its land area. With a temperate rain forest and one of the mainland United States' highest peaks, Washington has a lot to protect.

The train stops near Olympia, Washington's capital, at the south end of Puget Sound, where the state legislature debates changes in planning and environmental laws that attempt to protect the state's many natural jewels. The state's Growth Management Act, State Environmental Protection Act, and Shoreline Management Act comprise a trio of policies enacted over the years to preserve the state's environment and guide its growth.

As we approach Seattle, we begin to notice a difference from the city we left behind in Portland. Seattle seems bigger, faster, and richer, with a more dramatic landscape. When the clouds lift, you can see the tall peaks of the Cascades as well as the shorter, but dramatic, Olympics range, surrounded on three sides by water.

This faster, bigger, richer feel is backed up by the data. The Seattle metropolitan area population outranks Portland's by 1.3 million, and it has 680,000 more workers (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics 2014). The Seattle metropolitan economy added almost 147,000 jobs from 2003 to 2012—an increase of 9.5 percent. By contrast, Portland's job growth during the same period was a slower eight percent. And Seattle area wages average about \$10,000 per year higher than those in the Portland region. Both states have minimum wages higher than that set by the federal government. But Washington's, at \$9.32 is 22 cents higher than Oregon's. And as a sign of the region's progressive politics, the municipality of SeaTac voted in November 2013 to give their workers \$15.00 minimum (Johnson 2013).

The train pulls into Seattle at the King Street Station near Pioneer Square. Walk east, and you're in the International District, emblematic of one of the key differences between Portland and Seattle: ethnic diversity. With just over 600,000 people, the city of Seattle is not much larger than Portland, but Census 2010 tells us that ethnic minorities comprise a larger share of its population, although both cities are less diverse than the United States overall (U.S. Census Bureau 2010a).

Like Portland, Seattle residents are proud of their sustainability ethic, and they show it in how they get to work. Residents of both of these Cascadian cities are less likely to drive alone to work than the residents of many other U.S. cities. Across the United States, about 76 percent of commuters drive alone to work compared to 59 percent in the city of Portland and 49 percent in Seattle. In Portland, 11 percent of workers choose public transit while 20 percent of Seattle workers do, compared to the national average of five percent (U.S. Census Bureau 2012). Despite their more sustainable commuting habits, the population of the Seattle region overall spends more miles on the road—23 percent more vehicle miles traveled on a per capita basis than people living in the Portland region (Schrank, Eisele, and Lomax 2012).

We catch the Number 40 bus and head north to the South Lake Union area. Once an industrial center, South Lake Union is now a symbol of Seattle's new economy. It is home to the headquarters of Amazon and includes a heavy presence by Microsoft and a number of tech startups. Microsoft cofounder Paul Allen understood that starting a technology company is lonely work, and that success might depend upon one's ability to meet with and talk to others doing the same thing. So he created a place where smart people can work, live, and hang out—and share their ideas.

And smart they are. Among Seattle adults almost 58 percent have at least a bachelor's degree, while only 45 percent of their Portland counterparts do. This probably goes a long way toward explaining the difference in per capita income and wages. While Portland's per capita income is about 95 percent of the national metropolitan average, Seattle is over-performing the nation's metro average by 18 percent (U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis 2013). The region's economy includes a mix of mature and emerging industries, including aerospace, information technology, transportation and logistics, and life sciences. These industries offer plenty of high-paid, high-skilled jobs and the region also nurtures a growing clean-tech industry.

We head down to Pike Place Market to visit the longest continuously running farmers market in the United States and one of Cascadia's most visited tourist attractions. Here we get a glimpse of the variety of seafood and produce available in Washington and a view of the waterfront that once was the center of Seattle maritime trade. When the Alaskan Way Viaduct is taken down in 2016, after the completion of a new tunnel, this beautiful waterfront will be visible from many parts of the city.

As we head back to the King Street Station to reboard the train, we notice that it has started to rain. That rainy, cloudy environment unites Seattle, Portland, and Vancouver, all within the northern temperate rainforest on the west side of the Cascade Mountains.

The train takes us up through the northern suburbs of the Salish Sea (formerly known as Puget Sound) region and we enter the Skagit Valley. Defined

Sister Cities of the Northwest



CATEGORY	VANCOUVER	SEATTLE	PORTLAND
YEAR FOUNDED & ECONOMIC ORIGINS	1886 - Central government direction	1869 - Lumber boom, Yukon gold rush	1845 - Farming, Oregon Trail
ECONOMY	International trade, regional service	Robust high tech & high skill economy	Intel, Nike, clothing designers, artisans
CULTURE	International cosmopolitan	Geek hip w/ a leftover hint of grunge	Mellow, woody with full hipster cred
NICKNAME	Terminal City	The Emerald City	Stumptown
COOL NEW PLANNED DISTRICT	False Creek Olympic Village	South Lake Union	Pearl District
"EVEN-COOLER" DISTRICT	Mount Pleasant	Capitol Hill	Northwest 23rd
REGIONAL PLANNING	Intentionally compact with dense livable centers	Not as organized as Portland, but Regional Council is trying	Strongest Metro governance in the country, HooYAAAAH!
MEDIA EXPOSURE	2010 Winter Olympics, X-files	Sleepless in Seattle, 2013 SUPERBOWL, Frasier	Portlandia
TRANSIT	Driverless SkyTrain	Late on rail, yet lowest SOV use	"MAX" Rail transit, streetcars, excellent TOD
BICYCLING	Separated bike lanes into downtown & along waterfronts	Regional trails & commuters pedaling up "impossible" hills	10 times the national average of greenways,
FAVORITE DRINK	Afternoon tea with Mum, Molson's with a hockey game	Coffee, coffee, coffee, beer, coffee, coffee, wine, coffee	Beer - consumed within ¼ mile of the brewery
GREEN CRED	Greenpeace birthplace, plans to be world's "Greenest" by 2020	Salmon recovery, shoreline restoration Sustainable Seattle	Grey to Green program, Climate Action Plan, home of the Bottle Bill
LANDMARK	Whistler, pencil towers	Mt Rainier, Space Needle	Mt Hood, bridges
PARKS	Stanley Park & False Creek, run by a rare elected parks board	Great system built on Olmsted legacy & "Forward Thrust"	5,000-acre Forest Park, skateparks, urban parks, regional trails
SIGNATURE ATTRACTION	Granville Island & a really great Chinatown	Pike Place Market, Waterfront	Powell's Books Riverwalk
SIGNATURE FOOD	Dim sum in the morning sushi at night	Thrown salmon, local celebrity chefs' specials	Donuts, food carts, freegans

Figure 1.1. Sister cities of the Pacific Northwest: Three shades of gray

by the Skagit River that flows westward from the Cascades, the Skagit Valley, famous for its tulips and daffodils, is one of the most important agricultural valleys remaining and contains one of the region's strongest remaining salmon runs (Canty, Martinsons, and Kumar 2012). It is, however, under increasing development pressure; the state's Office of Financial Management predicts that more than 45,000 people will move to Skagit county by 2040—a 40 percent increase in its population.

As we leave the Skagit Valley and near Bellingham, Washington, Mount Baker looms toward the east, and we are reminded that Cascadia is part of the Ring of Fire—and that all of our cities lie within the Cascade Subduction Zone.

We cross the border at Blaine and soon we are in Vancouver, a city with about the same number of people as Seattle (Statistics Canada 2014), but a very different feel. As we emerge from the train, we hear many languages—only about half of the city's residents speak English as their first language. With more than 100,000 people speaking either Cantonese or another Chinese language, the city has a decidedly Asian feel.

Vancouver is also geographically much smaller than either Portland or Seattle at about 114 square kilometers or about 44 square miles, fitting Seattle's population into less than one-third of the space. Like the cities to the south, Metro Vancouver's population is growing. The region added about 197,000 residents from 2006 to 2011, and the greatest share of that growth was in the suburban city of Surrey (Statistics Canada 2014b).

The economy of metro Vancouver appears to be recovering from the recession. With a 7.1 percent unemployment rate, it is one of the lowest in Canada, but still higher than the current rates in both Seattle and Portland. The city boasts job growth in many new economy sectors, including digital media, information and communications technology, life sciences, and sustainable industries. But the region's economy continues to rely heavily on the mining industry, an important part of the economy since the gold rushes of the mid-1800s. It is strongly linked to the region's transportation and logistics sector which benefits from its close geographic and cultural ties to Asia.

Rural Cascadia

After returning to Seattle from Vancouver, we choose the train east from Seattle to Spokane, ride through the pass and enter the dry landscapes of Eastern Washington. Eastern Cascadia seems a different world than the wet west. Rural counties in Oregon and Washington feel economically distant from the technology and sustainability driven world of urban Cascadia.

Much of our journey through eastern Washington follows the mighty Columbia River. As the Columbia flows on its 1,200 mile course, it covers territory in seven states and the Canadian province of British Columbia, dividing Washington and Oregon through the scenic Columbia Gorge. The Columbia

River provided passage for the Lewis and Clark Corps of Discovery and it was at the mouth of the Columbia River, northwest of Portland, that they finally reached their destination, the Pacific Ocean. Hundreds of dams on the Columbia provide low-cost power that supports irrigation of this dry land. Passing wheat fields, apple orchards, vineyards, and rangeland dotted with wind turbines, we realize that the rural areas of Cascadia are vital to the survival of its cities and the economy of the region. The energy, water, and food provided by rural Cascadia to its cities are essential to their sustainability. As we plan the future of our states we realize that it depends in equal measure on the thriving cities and the people, towns, and landscapes that fall between them.

Perhaps it is this common fate that provides the thread that stitches together Cascadia's tapestry of cities, forests, mountains, farms, orchards and wide-open spaces. Perhaps our common appreciation of these diverse treasures keeps us asking, "How do we enhance and protect our human and natural assets?" As the train returns to Portland and we step into its thriving downtown, I realize that this question connects Cascadia's past with future, its north and south, and its rural and urban people.