

**Reading Tips and Study Questions: For Session 20  
Planning and Civic Capacity (A)—November 26<sup>th</sup>**

**Required reading:**

1. Briggs, "Managing Urban Growth: The Problem and Its Civics," Chapter 3 in *Democracy as Problem-Solving: Civic Capacity in Communities across the Globe*, Forthcoming, MIT Press, 2008.
2. (Case) Briggs, "Rethinking the American West: A Civic Intermediary and the Movement for 'Quality Growth' in Utah," chapter 4 in [same as above].

**Tips and questions**

As we have seen, modern planning evolved after the 19<sup>th</sup> century along a difficult path that often seemed to pit expertise against popular opinion, politics against rational choices. In a world of changing expectations, what does it take to envision and pursue choices that are not just popular but also wise?

This week, we go beyond the near obsession with "participation" in planning to explore a broader idea: Planning as part of the effort to build and use "civic capacity" to tackle significant challenges in the world in ways that can really make a difference.

For this session, we'll use two chapters on the "millennial" challenge of managing urban growth, from a book I've written about this civic capacity approach. One chapter is a case set in the U.S. In the next session, we'll discuss the second case in this pair, set in India.

1. The first chapter argues that managing growth cannot be done effectively simply by making better public policy, including better formal plans for growth: Why? And what does considering *learning* alongside *bargaining* add to our understanding of planning's role in creating a better world?
2. (Case chapter) Some advocates of the visioning done by Envision Utah tout its public meetings as the secret to its success. What does that view miss about how the organization approached the growth problem and possible solutions at the visioning phase of its work? And what important changes in role and strategy took place after that stage?
3. How should the success or shortcomings of an effort like this one be judged?