

# Sustainability Institute

Community Auditorium  
October 8, 2011

# Introduction

- First of two meetings
- This meeting is informational
  - Sustainability Concepts
  - Possible Definition
  - Sustainability Efforts
- Next meeting – October 22<sup>nd</sup>
  - Attendees develop a Community Program through SWOT analysis

# Why are we concerned about Sustainability?

- Usual Reasons (Environmental):
  - Limited Natural Resources
  - Climate Change
    - Increases in average annual temperatures
    - More weather extremes
    - Earlier snow-pack melt
  - State goal of reducing GHG emissions 75% below 1990 by 2050
  - Concentrations of harmful man-made/synthetic materials in ecosystem
- Other Reasons:
  - Equity
  - Inclusionary
  - Economic
  - Vision Statement

# Why are we concerned about Sustainability?

- **Forest Grove Vision Statement**
  - A community recognized for its commitment to conserve, preserve, protect and restore our natural assets.
    - Objective 1: Maintain and improve the quality of air, water, soil, etc. to ensure livability by using leading technology and land use methods
    - Objective 2: Promote Forest Grove as “The Greenest City in Oregon” through landscaping and ecologically-sound industry, businesses, utilities, transportation and development.
    - Objective 3: To be recognized by an organization such as the Green Guide as a “Green City”

# Roots of Sustainability

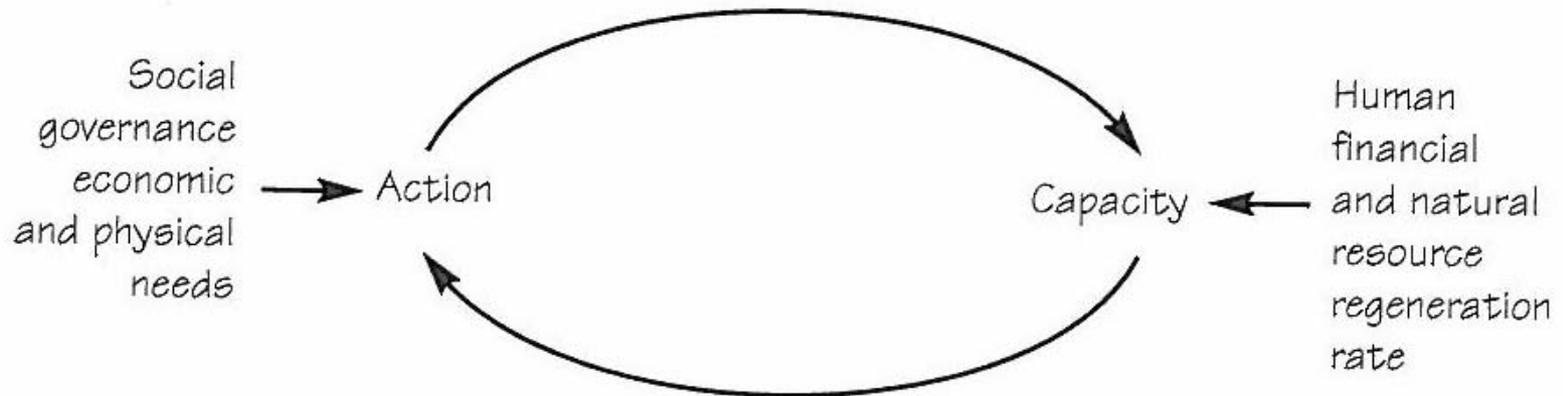
(Source: The Key to Sustainable Cities by Gwendolyn Hallsmith)

- Systems approach
- Focus on:
  - Community
    - Individuals/Households
    - Businesses and Non-profit Organizations
    - Governing bodies
  - Interrelationships (remember the 70's)
- Four areas of community:
  - Physical
  - Economic
  - Governance
  - Social

# Roots of Sustainability

(Continued)

Figure 1.1 The Sustainability Cycle



# Roots of Sustainability

(Continued)

- Criteria – used to help communities think through all of the inter-sector ramifications:
  - The proposed activity needs to demonstrate that it:
    - Creates or supports systems in a community that care for people in some way;
    - Strengthens civic participation in decisions that affect the community;
    - Distributes benefits and burdens equitably;
    - Increases the value and vitality of human and natural systems – locally and wherever the activity has an impact; and
    - Conserves and renews human, natural and financial resources.

# Melbourne Principles

- Provide a long-term vision for cities based on: sustainability; intergenerational, social, economic and political equity; and their individuality.
- Achieve long-term economic and social security.
- Recognize the intrinsic value of biodiversity and natural ecosystems, and protect and restore them.
- Enable communities to minimize their ecological footprint.

# Melbourne Principles

(Continued)

- Build on the characteristics of ecosystems in the development and nurturing of healthy and sustainable cities.
- Recognize and build on the distinctive characteristics of cities, including their human and cultural values, history and natural systems.
- Empower people and foster participation.

# Melbourne Principles

(Continued)

- Expand and enable cooperative networks to work towards a common, sustainable future.
- Promote sustainable production and consumption, through appropriate use of environmentally sound technologies and effective demand management.
- Enable continual improvement, based on accountability, transparency and good government.

# Green versus Sustainability

- **Green**

- Detailed focus
- Tactical rather than strategic approach
- Focuses on ecological considerations
- Focuses on being less bad
- Lacks common definition of success

- **Sustainability**

- Whole system focus
- Strategic approach
- Considers social, economic and environmental needs
- Aligns with natural processes
- Values long-range considerations over short-term incremental actions

# Definition of Sustainability

- Meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs (UN Bruntland Commission)
- Living well within the limits of nature (Sharing Natures Interest)
- Using natural, financial and human resources in a responsible manner that meets existing needs without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs (City of Corvallis)
- Sustainability is about aligning our built environment and socio-economic activities with the natural systems that support life. In the long-run, sustainability means adapting human activities to nature's constraints and opportunities. Central to this definition is meeting the needs of both the present and the future. (Marin County Plan)

# Possible Definition of Sustainability

- *Using all resources (societal, economic and natural) in an efficient and equitable manner. Sustainability in Forest Grove means considering long-term environmental, economic and social impacts of our actions. Sustainability prioritizes long-term needs over short-term gains to ensure that resources necessary to sustain life are available now and in the future.*
  - The term **efficient** means using resources in a cost-effective way taking into account life-cycle and replacement cost. Efficient use of resources means using natural resources no faster than they can be replenished through natural systems.
  - The term **equity** means the benefits and cost associated with society are distributed proportionately within the community.

# Break

# General Examples

- The Natural Step
- Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) for Neighborhoods
- Eco-Districts
- Living Building Challenge
- Green Roads Initiative
- Solar Local Improvement District

# Natural Step

- Step A – Awareness
  - Develop a common understanding around sustainability
- Step B – Baseline Analysis
  - Analyze the social and environmental impacts of our organization and city
- Step C – Compelling Vision – What does a sustainable Forest Grove look like?
  - Our operations are energy efficient and rely on renewal energy
  - We reduce solid waste as an organization and community
  - Every purchasing decision we make has a positive sustainability impact
  - We create conditions that provides an opportunity for residents, visitors and workers to meet their daily needs locally
  - We as an organization contribute to a vibrant local community
  - Current and future residents have the opportunity to reside in housing that is affordable and meets their living needs based on age, size of family, etc.
  - Jobs are available in the community that match local skills.
  - Residents have the opportunity to take care of shopping, recreational and services needs close to their place of residence.
- Step D – Down to Action

# Natural Step

- Sustainability Principle 1: What We Take is Replenished
- Sustainability Principle 2: What we make does not build up in and harm nature
- Sustainability Principle 3: We protect natural systems from degradation
- Sustainability Principle 4: We support people in their desire to meet their own needs

# LEED for Neighborhood Development (ND)

- Rating system for design and development of new neighborhoods.
- Created by the US Green Building Council in partnership with the Congress for New Urbanism and the Natural Resources Defense Council.
- Integrates the principles of smart growth, new urbanism, and green building.

# Eco-Districts

- An eco-district is a neighborhood or district with a broad commitment to accelerate neighborhood-scale sustainability. (Portland Sustainability Initiative).
- Eco-districts promote sustainable neighborhood development through integrated infrastructure projects including district level utilities and infrastructure.
- Eco-districts are places
  - That value diversity and encourages participation
  - Have the lowest possible environmental footprint
  - Provides access to nature and open space
- Performance areas include: community vitality, air quality and carbon, energy, access and mobility, water, habitat and ecosystem function, and materials management

# Local Examples

- Pacific University
- UCC
- City of Forest Grove
- Tri-County
- State and Metro
- City of Portland
- City of Corvallis

# Pacific University

- Doug Martin

# UCC

- Statement of Sustainability (copy in your packet)
- Environmental orientation

# City of Forest Grove

- Energy conservation incentives
- Water conservation incentives
- Pure Power Renewable Energy
- Tree City USA/Tree Growth Award
- Parks Debris Recycling Program
- Watershed Timber Harvesting
- FCS Certification
- Sidewalk Improvements
- Community Garden
- Promote Light Rail extension
- Economic Development

# Tri-County

(Metro, City of Portland, Three Counties)

- Green Building Hotline
- Clearinghouse and Referral Service
- Some Major Areas
  - Commercial and Residential
  - Site Development
  - Remodeling and New Construction
  - Financial Incentives
- Valerie Garrett
  - (503) 823-5431
  - [Valerie.garrett@portlandoregon.gov](mailto:Valerie.garrett@portlandoregon.gov)

# State and Metro

- Reduction of GHG Emissions
  - 2009 and 2010, the legislature adopted HB 2001 and SB 1059
  - Reduce emissions by 75 percent below 1990 levels by 2050
  - Reduce 21 percent in GHG from *light vehicles* for the Portland region by 2035

# City of Portland/Multnomah Co. Climate Action Plan

- Goals (Executive Summary in your packet)
  - GHG –
    - 10% reduction below 1990 by 2010
    - 40% reduction by 2030
    - 80% reduction by 2050

# City of Portland/Multnomah Co. Climate Action Plan

- Areas of Focus
  - Building and Energy
  - Urban Form and Mobility
  - Consumption and Solid Waste
  - Urban Forestry and Natural Systems
  - Food and Agriculture
  - Community Engagement
  - Climate Change Preparation
  - Local Government Operations

# City of Corvallis

- The City uses a triple-bottom-line framework to enhance sustainability in all aspects of the organization's activities. City departments, through changes in daily operations, ongoing programs and long-range planning are able to simultaneously have a significant positive impact on the environment, the economic efficiency of municipal government and the social character of the workplace. Departments promote actions which are environmentally and socially beneficial while also being economically intelligent.

# City of Corvallis

(Continued)

- **Triple Bottom Line** - The term is used to capture the set of values, issues and processes that organizations must address to minimize harm and create environmental, economic, and social value.

# City of Corvallis

(Continued)

- Environmental sustainability - The City values actions that are beneficial for the natural environment as well as for the health and safety of employees and the public, and that go beyond regulatory compliance to minimize the City's environmental impacts.
- Economic sustainability - The City values wise use of public funds and considers the full cost or life-cycle cost implications of its efforts.
- Social sustainability - The City values an open and friendly organization that is free from bigotry and intimidation, and exercises policies and programs that make it an Employer of Choice. In addition, the services provided to citizens do not burden or unfairly impact any one sector of the community.

# Next Step

- Participation Phase: SWOT Analysis
- Where: Community Auditorium
- When: Saturday, October 22<sup>nd</sup>
- Time: 9:30 am
  
- From this, develop a program

# Sustainability Considerations

- What is the basis of sustainability?
- Develop a strategic framework for applying sustainability in day-to-day planning and decision making
- Identify what we have influence over in terms of sustainability
- Flourishing Environment
  - Built environments supporting healthy eco-systems
  - Prosperous Economy
  - Health and Well Being

# For Further Information

Jon Holan

Community Development Director

P.O. Box 326

1924 Council Street

Phone: (503) 992-3224

E-mail: [jholan@forestgrove-or.gov](mailto:jholan@forestgrove-or.gov)