



BROUGHT TO YOU BY

ECODISTRICTS

FROM THE
NEIGHBORHOOD UP



2013 HIGHLIGHTS

ECODISTRICTS INCUBATOR

PORTLAND, OR MAY 29-31, 2013

2013 INCUBATOR HIGHLIGHTS

Ever year, EcoDistricts assemble a group of leading urban development practitioners and city officials with one goal: accelerate district-scale sustainable development in their communities. This year, 47 leaders from eight North American cities gathered in Portland to shape the future of green neighborhood development in their communities.

Speakers included nationally regarded economist Joe Cortright, who has spent the last several years analyzing the economic benefits to cities of investments in sustainability (what he calls the green dividend) and Trent Berry of Compass Resource Management, who is helping cities and universities build low carbon district utility systems.



Adam Beck, Program Director at EcoDistricts guided the group along with skilled team facilitators to maximize collaboration, innovative ideas, and problem solving. As Beck expressed it: "I think the EcoDistricts Framework is gaining momentum, traction and interest because it is a flexible framework. It allows people to take abstract concepts around green cities and sustainability and break them down and imbed them into their planning processes."



Over three days, city teams created individual roadmaps to guide their projects from design through

implementation. **Carlos Castellanos** from Oakland commented, "What excites me the most about the Incubator is the framework that's been tried and tested. This framework says we can look at things from an environmental perspective and a social perspective, and blend the two. It's been proven and so, we in Oakland don't have to try and reinvent it. We can learn from the best practices that are out there."



The strategic work sessions helped identified key barriers for these projects. **Don Edwards** of Justice & Sustainability Associates in DC reflected: "it's an important challenge to figure out how to communicate, how to effectively engage people in the conversation. EcoDistricts provides a doorway to achieve these [things] and ultimately, unless we find that sweet spot we won't get that momentum that we need."

By bringing together the best city and district innovators in North America —the Incubator is creating a network-within-a-network of ecodistrict leaders. "This convening is starting to develop a network of ecodistricts communities, and when you have this larger network, it's no longer just a community here and there, it becomes something much more powerful," said **Julia Erlbaum**, Founder and Principal of Real Food Colorado in Denver.



3
DAYS

8
CITIES

47
LEADERS +
INNOVATORS

23
INDUSTRY
EXPERTS



8
CITIES

8
PROJECTS



Bend, OR Bend's Sustainable Neighborhood Initiative holds transformational potential for the region's expected growth. At the heart of the proposed ecodistrict is a major couplet connecting the established downtown and historic residential neighborhoods to the former industrial lands. Leaders came to the Incubator to address challenges around city, community and property owner engagement, neighborhood identity; and replicable ecodistrict models for Bend. The Bend team left the Incubator with new ideas about changing the city's "poverty with a view" identity while addressing true community issues and values in the creation of an ecodistrict.

Burlington, VT The Burlington Railyard Enterprise project faces issues of climate change, traffic congestion and brownfield restoration. This lakeside brownfield neighborhood is poised to create a new urban street grid that will integrate multi-use development, energy-efficient affordable housing, a myriad of transportation alternatives and additional public access to Lake Champlain. The hope is to grow a vibrant business scene and meet the community's housing needs. Supported by the Incubator, the Burlington team identified three top priorities: form a neighborhood governance structure, institutionalize ecodistrict policy citywide and integrate their EcoDistricts roadmap with their planBTV: Downtown and Waterfront Master Plan.

Cambridge, MA Over the past 30 years, Kendall Square has catapulted into a major commercial, innovation and transportation hub. Anchored by prominent technology, research and academic institutions, Kendall Square is looking to push the envelope for a more sustainable community with a new ecodistrict that will be globally significant for the innovation economy. The leadership team members spent their Incubator time focusing on creating healthy, equitable working and living spaces through open space planning, placemaking and complete street design. Through work sessions, the team developed these aims: create a communication structure to bring community members together to discuss the ecodistrict, including the large companies and institutions (MIT); attract funding to spur private investment and/or capture government attention and balance housing development with the influx of new jobs.

Charleston, SC Charleston's ecodistrict is transitioning from its heavy commercial and industrial roots to modern workplaces, retail, restaurants and dense housing. With the city government of Charleston looking for innovative land use planning and new community engagement strategies, the ecodistrict project is in a position to heavily influence the neighborhood revitalization process. The Charleston team came to the Incubator with the goal of catalyzing public interest and investment in areas such as green building, infrastructure, public spaces, and stormwater management. Team members left the Incubator with a concrete plan to develop their city as a center of affordable and equitable "place-based" sustainability solutions - a model for coastal ecodistricts across the southern United States.

Denver, CO Home to low-income residents, a power plant, a dead stretch of the South Platte River, the Sports Authority Field at Mile High and stadium-related surface parking lots, the Sun Valley neighborhood has suffered from isolation, neglect

and a lack of investment. Despite these challenges, Sun Valley contains enormous potential with strong community amenities to build upon - an elementary school, recreation center, hundreds of miles of regional trails, a new library, and a new light rail station. The Sun Valley team arrived at the Incubator with the particular goals of spurring both private and public investment and partnership in the ecodistrict, as well as incorporating the area's existing light manufacturing industry into environmentally focused development and job creation. At the Incubator's conclusion, the community leaders were optimistic about the role of existing governance elements in future redevelopment. The Sun Valley team also developed a strategy to eliminate barriers between private ecodistrict developers and established rules and regulations.

Oakland, CA The City of Oakland is leading a collaborative effort to integrate affordable housing, public transit, and neighborhood revitalization efforts in a severely economically disadvantaged transit corridor - the International Boulevard Corridor, which spans over seven miles. The stakeholders engaged in the collaboration seek to optimize benefits to the community from expected growth and development in the Bay Area. While long-term development of the corridor is extremely promising, significant neighborhood challenges exist, such as high levels of crime that impact quality of life and public transit use, as well as the risk of resident and merchant displacement as a result of new transit lines. Nonetheless, the Oakland team used their experience at the Incubator to create both a development plan focusing on low-income community members and an effective governance structure that will engage stakeholders through quarterly meetings and community liaisons.

Orlando, FL The Central Downtown Orlando ecodistrict encompasses metro Orlando's cultural, commercial and residential center, which is currently diversifying from a financial, legal and government hub to high-tech businesses and residential development. The City is preparing to complete a new downtown strategic plan, which puts the ecodistrict in a position to help define Orlando's redevelopment. The City's plan includes policies to both retrofit aging infrastructure and integrate 10 million square feet of sustainable real estate development. After a successful three days of Incubator discussion, Orlando's leaders developed an ambitious plan to develop the Central Downtown Orlando ecodistrict as a positive model for Orlando citywide and beyond.

San Diego, CA North Park Main Street carries a strong legacy of neighborhood-based leadership from its early adoption of the Sustainable Main Street program to the recent North Park EcoDistrict Initiative. Today, North Park Main Street, San Diego Gas and Electric and San Diego Green Building Council are working together to further the district's goal for a vibrant, integrated neighborhood. The San Diego leaders used their experience at the Incubator to target neighborhood priorities such as better connectivity between North Park residents, business owners and landowners. By the end of the work sessions, team members had strategized the use of the EcoDistricts model to address the specific issues of the economic value of land use, a broader tax base, and the North Park site's vacant landowners.

For more details on the Incubator cities, visit ecodistricts.org/incubator.

EcoDistricts mission is to inspire every city to remake itself from the neighborhood up by bringing together builders and entrepreneurs, policymakers and urban innovators to create vibrant neighborhoods, smart cities and a healthy planet.

LEARN MORE AT: [ECODISTRICTS.ORG](https://ecodistricts.org)