EcoDistricts

Portland Ecodistrict Pilot Program Evaluation

Report of Findings

FEBRUARY 2015

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Through the support of the Bullitt Foundation, EcoDistricts undertook an evaluation of the Portland Ecodistrict Pilot program, a three-year partnership between the City of Portland, Portland Development Commission (PDC) and Portland Sustainability Institute (PoSI) to accelerate sustainable neighborhood-scale projects in five districts throughout Portland between 2009 and 2012.

The City selected the five following districts to participate in the program in order to promote sustainability across a diverse set of neighborhood "typologies":

- Portland State University - South of Market Ecodistrict ("SoMa")
- North Macadam Urban Renewal Area - South Waterfront Ecodistrict
- Lents Urban Renewal Area - Foster-Green Ecodistrict
- Gateway Urban Renewal Area - Gateway Ecodistrict
- Lloyd District - Lloyd Ecodistrict

This evaluation is one element of a four-part Bullitt funded project to more deeply understand best practices for district and neighborhood sustainable development in the region. The four elements are: Portland Pilot program evaluation; analysis of neighborhood sustainability projects in the Cascadia Region; update of the EcoDistricts Protocol; and a technical guide for green infrastructure and ecosystem services. All four elements of this project have been designed to inform the development of the Global EcoDistricts Protocol and other EcoDistricts-initiated programs intended to accelerate district-scale sustainable development in the region and beyond.

The Portland Pilot provided important lessons and intelligence to help EcoDistricts advance its mission, in particular in updating the EcoDistricts Framework, a performance and process standard first created to guide the Portland pilot, into a credible guidance tool to reward and verify exemplar projects across the globe. Renamed the EcoDistricts Protocol (Protocol), it has the potential to bring community-driven urban regeneration to scale, creating long-term, positive change in the way our urban ecosystems shape the lives of their inhabitants and relate to the global environment.

EcoDistricts' ultimate goal is to catalyze a broad movement to create resilient and equitable cities, grounded in local knowledge of community assets and priorities. This kind of change can move from aspiration to action only when it is based on rigorously tested strategies. This evaluation is designed to support that effort by identifying the impact of the first pilot projects and translating those findings into actionable information for new projects and for the forthcoming iteration of the Protocol.

The evaluation aimed to document the status of each of the five pilot neighborhoods and capture lessons learned and best practices from the last five years of neighborhood-scale sustainable development in the five pilot areas. It provided an opportunity for reflection with key stakeholders and those still actively working in the districts.

The evaluation revealed several key lessons that will be detailed in the full report. They include the following themes:

- Invest in authentic engagement and community ownership: While a full, strategic engagement approach takes a significant amount of time to develop in a community, this upfront investment in making sure all of the appropriate representatives are at the table will help to ensure progress can be made faster later, with clear community support.

- Advance meaningful collaboration and deep integration: The concept of developing an integrated plan of action with stakeholders (public, private, NGO) that rarely work together, guided by common sustainability performance areas is hard, but critical to maximize the impact of disparate investments.

- Start with flexibility and adaptability: Neighborhoods aren't buildings, nor static. Rather than a prescriptive approach typically found in rating systems, project teams valued the ability to customize the EcoDistricts approach to their own unique challenges, assets and needs.

- Prioritize staff capacity and funding: There is no replacement for dedicated senior leadership to coordinate the stakeholders, commitments, planning, and integration and implementation of projects. This, plus a commitment of dedicated funding and a sharing of power, is the best way to ensure progress will be made.

- Ensure early wins: Since a successful, integrated process can sometimes be lengthy, early "wins" that provide tangible results for the community are essential to keeping momentum going and community investment strong.

- Hone in on community interests and needs: Most neighborhoods have been through a neighborhood planning process in the recent past. Rather than starting with a blank slate, focusing in from the beginning on the prior work to quickly determine (and sometimes reiterate) a community's top priorities can lead to early wins, deeper community involvement and profoundly improved long-term results.

EcoDistricts' work on these pilot projects and the lessons learned, as detailed in this report, have powerfully informed our current work, especially our forthcoming revised and expanded EcoDistricts Protocol and Target Cities program. As the following report demonstrates, this evaluation gave us cause for great encouragement and optimism about the kinds of changes that can happen when communities commit to neighborhood-up investments and action.

BACKGROUND

EcoDistricts was founded by former Portland, Oregon Mayor Sam Adams in 2009 as the Portland Sustainability Institute (PoSI) to support the city's efforts to promote "next-generation sustainability" for the region. In partnership with the Mayor's Office, Bureau of Planning and Sustainability (BPS) and Portland Development Commission (PDC), PoSI helped launch the Ecodistricts Initiative in 2010, a five-neighborhood pilot program with the following goals: 1) create an integrated sustainability innovation strategy that linked local neighborhood economic and community development with the region's clean technology and green development cluster; 2) launch catalytic district-scale projects that maximized community benefits and local green job creation; and 3) build robust neighborhood governance to guide implementation and monitor progress over time to advance community and city objectives.

The program was part of Mayor Sam Adams' broader sustainability platform. PoSI was contracted by the Portland Development Commission and Bureau of Planning and Sustainability with oversight from the Mayor's Office to design the program and support parts of its implementation. With direction from the Portland Development Commission, the City decided to conduct the pilot within five of the officially designated Urban Renewal Areas (URA) – South Auditorium, North Macadam, Lents, Gateway, and Lloyd. Viewed as catalytic redevelopment areas within the city, they were chosen because of their diverse neighborhood densities (commercial, residential, institutional) and project opportunities. As officially designated URAs, each pilot had some level of governance already in place and access to tax increment financing to help advance projects.

To guide the work, PoSI developed the EcoDistricts Framework, a collaboratively built process management tool designed to implement and institutionalize sustainable district-scale best practices that integrates green building and smart infrastructure investments with robust community engagement and action. Support and guidance came in the form of an eighty-person Technical Advisory Committee made up of Portland's leading sustainability thinkers — staff from public bureaus, academics from local universities, and many professionals in the fields of planning, green building, development and non-profit management. Over a year and a half, this group helped shape the creation of the EcoDistricts Framework and four toolkits on governance, finance, policy, and performance areas. These publications were the first of their kind to advance district-scale development in the areas of process and performance.

Informed by the principles of collaborative governance and collective impact, the Framework is intended to advance multi-sector project implementation in a traditionally fragmented landscape where projects are often funded by a patchwork of entities that may include private investment, Community Development Corporations, municipalities, and place-based and national foundations. It is designed to work in a diverse range of project types, from brownfield redevelopment to infill development, in neighborhoods with complex problems including aging infrastructure and building stock, inadequate transit and mobility options, high instances of poverty, and fragmented local leadership. It complements and promotes the use of rating tools such as the STAR Communities Rating System (STAR) and LEED for Neighborhood Development (LEED ND).

The Framework centers on the implementation of a four-step process:

1. District Organization: building governance and public policy support to guide local project(s).
2. District Assessment: creating a performance-based neighborhood sustainability roadmap that addresses comprehensive performance metrics (EcoDistricts Performance Areas).
3. Project Development: launching catalytic district-scale sustainability projects that spur neighborhood investment.
4. District Management: developing long-term district management to guide implementation and monitor results.

PoSI facilitated the Portland pilot program for over three years, providing leadership and support to the city, PDC and neighborhood steering committees. Activities included facilitating multi-sector MOUs for each pilot area, helping to clarifying roles and responsibilities, and securing funding. PoSI supported and delivered a range of assessment and project analyses in each district, helping to shape a work plan that is guiding current projects. In addition, PoSI created a set of implementation toolkits and best practice documents to help build capacity and strengthen the Framework, including an equity-screening tool to further enhance inclusion and community benefits.

Over the course of the pilot, which officially concluded with the Portland City Council adopting the program in October 2012, PoSI and each pilot neighborhood learned important lessons about multi-sector convening, engagement, assessment, and assumptions about what constitutes sustainability. There were challenges along the way, some expected, some not. Nevertheless, there have been significant positive outcomes for the communities and invaluable strengthening of the EcoDistricts model: each pilot neighborhood has found a voice and identity through EcoDistricts that resonates with residents and fosters a new relationship with municipal leadership and real estate developers.

BEYOND THE PORTLAND PILOT

In 2010, PoSI began to shape a broader EcoDistricts agenda in partnership with other city and industry leaders across North America. Activities included the launch of the EcoDistricts Summit and extensive municipal outreach across North America. In 2012, PoSI created the Incubator, a three-day executive-level training program for emerging neighborhood-scale project teams from North America. As interest in sustainable neighborhood development and the number of projects grew, PoSI convened a 24-person advisory committee from 16 cities to study the state of the market, identify barriers, provide feedback on the Framework, and develop a technical assistance program. From the report findings, PoSI built a strategic plan to promote district-scale sustainability and support the growing number of place-based and thematic district-scale projects.

In November 2012, the PoSI Board of Directors voted to expand beyond our Portland roots to accelerate sustainable neighborhoods in North America starting in 2013. Transitional activities included developing a five-year business plan, rebranding the organization (now known simply as EcoDistricts), recruiting a North American Board of Directors, hiring senior staff, and expanding fundraising. In 2013 and 2014, EcoDistricts continued to offer the Incubator in Portland, while taking the EcoDistricts Summit national, first to Boston and then to Washington, DC. Both programs expanded the organization's reach and influence. Since 2012, EcoDistricts has advised on over 30 district projects and convened and trained over 3,000 urban development leaders.

In June 2014, EcoDistricts continued to expand its organizational capacity and programming with the launch of Target Cities, an eight city, ten project pilot program to advance district-scale sustainable development across North America and a major overhaul of the EcoDistricts Framework. These new projects stand on the shoulders of the pilot efforts explored in these pages. Since our founding as PoSi five years ago, we have continually refined our practice and our resources in response to new information and to the feedback we received from project teams. The findings in this report make an invaluable contribution to that growing body of knowledge.

PILOT EVALUATION

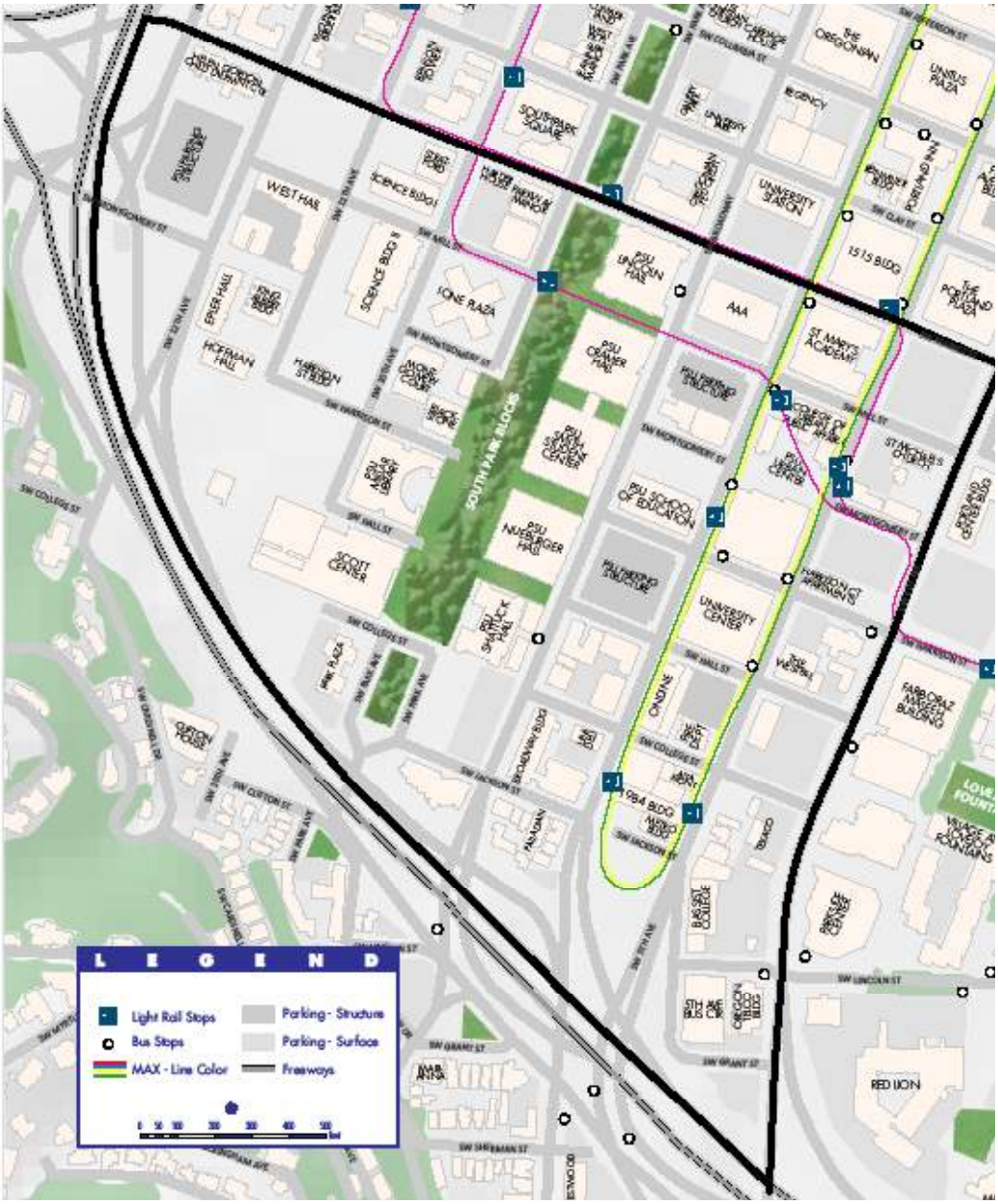
The Portland Pilot Program Evaluation provided an opportunity for reflection with key public, private and community-based stakeholders who helped to design and implement the pilot, including those still actively working in the districts. The Portland Pilot Program was implemented with the aim of establishing new approaches to urban redevelopment, with an emphasis on promoting collaborative stakeholder engagement, creating robust governance structures, and introducing rigorous metrics to shape project investments. Because of its focus on deep collaboration across sectors and sustainability fields, the EcoDistricts approach stands in contrast to typical approaches to urban redevelopment and has little precedence. As a result, it is important to document the Portland experience to shape future investments.

This evaluation included two phases: 1) an extensive desk-based review of reports, documents, contracts, and tools and 2) interviews with 16 key stakeholders, two to four from each pilot, as well as advisors and implementers close to the development of the pilot program.

For this evaluation, a review of all district-scale projects within the pilot boundaries was completed for priorities identified in each pilot's EcoDistrict Roadmap. The evaluation highlights two types of projects: 1) projects catalyzed by the pilot program (through assessment, business planning, and roadmaps) and 2) projects that were not part of the pilot program that were initiated by the city, major institutions, developers, or other community-based organizations or partnerships. Identifying and exploring both project types highlights the number of overlapping district-scale sustainability efforts that are underway and the opportunity to create a more comprehensive and integrative governance and tracking infrastructure to optimize the investments.

For the analysis of the pilot process, interview questions addressed each of the existing four steps in the EcoDistricts methodology: Governance, Assessment, Project Delivery and Management. Successes, barriers, lessons learned and recommendations to future cities and districts pursuing EcoDistricts were also discussed. Interviews were informal, but in depth. The questions differed depending on the perspective and role of each interviewee.

SOUTH OF MARKET



At a Glance

TOTAL AREA	92 acres
TOTAL POPULATION	Approx. 4,000 residents, 29,703 students
MEDIAN AGE	23.9
PER CAPITA INCOME	$20,301
TOTAL AREA OF BUILDINGS	1,050,150 SF
% RESIDENTIAL	15%
% COMMERCIAL	26%
% INSTITUTIONAL	51%
# LEED CERTIFIED BUILDINGS	10

Project Summary

The South of Market (SoMa) Ecodistrict, centered around Portland State University's (PSU) campus, is located on the southern end of Portland's central city core in what is known as the "University District." It is a dense urban environment, with a mix of high-density institutional and residential buildings within a public realm that includes multi-modal transportation and green spaces. While it is a mixed-use neighborhood, retail options are limited for an urban university of PSU's size. The Ecodistrict's boundary consists of approximately 50% PSU-owned properties, making the university a leader and catalytic stakeholder within the district, but not able to act alone. Several city and other institutional agencies have offices within this district, as well as a number of private commercial owners, particularly to the north and east of the university core. The City of Portland also owns a significant portion of open space, including the South Park Blocks, which create a green-space network on the west side of the district. As a university and dominant property owner, PSU is able to leverage the resources necessary for focused planning efforts. The result has been an advanced framework plan with sustainability goals related to economic development, mobility, open space, preservation, energy and water conservation, and material use. In addition, while PSU's Climate Action Plan lays out strategies and targets to achieve carbon neutrality by 2040, actions in its EcoDistrict plan focus on buildings, materials, travel and commuting, research and education.

Key Activities

GOVERNANCE

PoSI started working with Portland State University (PSU) in 2009 to advance the Ecodistrict pilot. At the time, PSU was developing a new University District Framework Plan to shape future growth and a Climate Action Plan as part of the American College and University Presidents' Climate Commitment (ACUPCC). There wasn't a natural "go-to" governing committee or body that was advancing sustainability across the university. The Framework and Climate Action Plan were being led by different departments, so the first action was to determine who would lead the Ecodistrict pilot.

In 2010, the administration directed the Department of Planning, Construction and Real Estate (PCRE) to lead the pilot and to engage major property owners to the east of 4th Ave. Over the course of several one-on-one conversations and workshops to discuss opportunities and challenges within the district, PSU set out to build a shared vision for the district that went beyond the campus boundaries.

In April 2011, the university launched the newly branded South of Market Ecodistrict (SoMa) and formed an "ad hoc" Working Group to draft a Memorandum of Understanding to determine the project's boundary, vision, and immediate priorities. During this time, several community engagement events were held to introduce and advance district-scale sustainability to the broader campus community.

ASSESSMENT

The SoMa Working Group launched an assessment to identify district-wide project priorities. With funding from the Bullitt Foundation, PSU, in partnership with PoSI, was able to undertake an assessment process that engaged the city and key academic departments.

This assessment had several parts that were completed in parallel. The Steering Committee worked with PoSI, external consultants and PSU staff to gather baseline data from the district's building stock. In addition, the team of stakeholders worked together to develop and issue a survey to identify areas of value, assets, change, and needs. Workshops were held with the community to present data and survey results and then further develop specific goal areas.

Information gathered from the baseline data collection, the survey results, existing PSU and City of Portland plans, and community workshop outcomes were analyzed and led to the creation of the SoMa Ecodistrict Roadmap. The roadmap included a set of priority projects in the following categories:

- Improved Connectivity
- Destination Gathering Places
- Green Infrastructure
- District Utilities
- Existing Building Retrofits

To support the next steps in advancing PSU's district utility investments, PoSI commissioned Compass Resource Management to study the technical and business feasibility of expanding the system beyond the university's boundaries. This included exploring ease of implementation, economic viability, and environmental benefits. The initial screening suggested that the expansion was economically viable and would contribute to several goals in PSU's Climate Action Plan. PoSI then developed a federal Woody Biomass Utilization grant proposal to analyze the viability of switching PSU's system from natural gas to biomass fuel. Although the grant proposal wasn't successful, the process of developing it helped to shape PSU's thinking about future district energy investments.

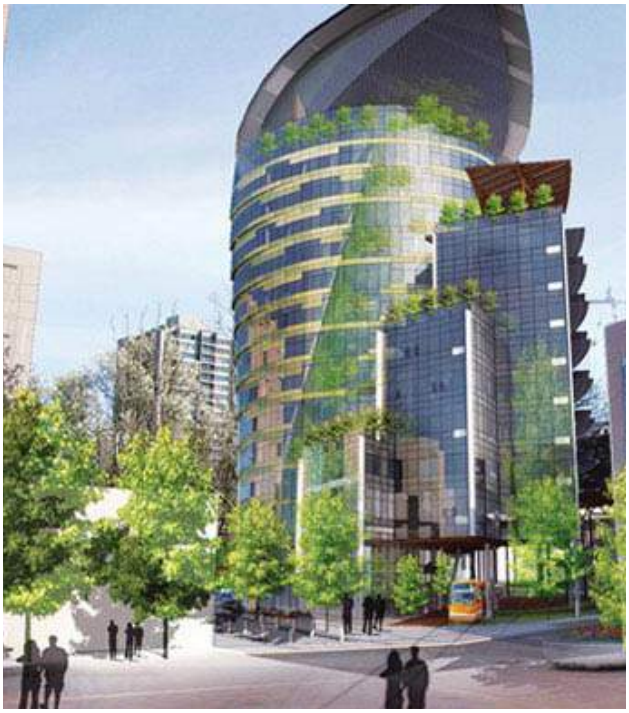
In partnership with the city and the National Renewable Energy Laboratory, the Solar America Cities Program completed a study to determine the solar potential for the five pilot projects in the city. The South of Market area was found to have 4,879,231 square feet of usable solar rooftop area and further analysis was recommended.

During the pilot period, the feasibility of two additional projects was also undertaken. PoSI and PSU worked together to explore the potential of a district-wide and citywide bike sharing program, as well as a Parking Benefit District for the South of Market area.

Project Development: Projects Catalyzed by the Pilot Process

BUILDINGS

Oregon Sustainability Center



Between 2009 and early 2012, the Oregon Sustainability Center was a major initiative of Mayor Adam's Office. It was a partnership between the City, Oregon University System and sustainability advocates to deliver the most advanced commercial green building on the planet. The project was designed to be "triple net zero" in energy, water and waste and a demonstration of the latest technologies in the area of on-site renewable energy, water management, and green materials. The project stalled when proponents were unable to secure government bonds to finance its construction. While the project never got off the ground, those involved felt it brought important stakeholders together, and created lasting partnerships that have led to the development of other sustainability-related projects, including the expansion of Oregon BEST, which supports Oregon-based clean technology companies.

ENERGY EFFICIENCY

At the time of this report, PSU was in the process of securing a $1.5 million grant from the Economic Development Administration (EDA) to create the SoMa Energy Efficiency Program, or SoMa 3E. SoMa 3E is an integrated energy program designed to meet both climate mitigation and economic and workforce development goals. The project utilizes SoMa to provide hands-on learning experiences for students pursuing careers in energy efficiency and clean energy. The project will simultaneously test and demonstrate a coordinated approach to district-scale energy efficiency and produce a pipeline of professional and managerial level employees for the fast growing, energy efficiency industry in the Portland metropolitan region.

SoMa 3E establishes an energy efficiency "Living Laboratory." Through implementation of monitoring and verification technology across 21 buildings in the Ecodistrict and the creation of a technology visualization theater, PSU graduate and undergraduate students will work with state-of-the-art technology to study and evaluate real-time building performance. The Living Laboratory will form a core component of a new Portland State University professional certificate program in Energy Efficiency. It will also provide SoMa building owners new data on building efficiency and the ability to document energy efficiency success stories throughout the district.

COMMUNITY ACTION

Halprin Open Space Sequence

The Halprin Open Space Sequence is an eight-block area of parks and plazas designed in the 1960s as the center piece to the South Auditorium Urban Renewal Area, an effort to revitalize a low-income and blighted community into a high-density, mixed-income downtown neighborhood. In 2001, a local real estate developer began an initiative to refurbish the parks and helped found the Halprin Parks Conservancy to support ongoing fundraising and program management. In 2013, the Parks were listed in the National Historic Registry of Historic Places. The parks and plazas have recently been in need of additional repair and have been underutilized due to a lack of connectivity to the University despite its proximity. The SoMa Ecodistrict, being adjacent to the Halprin Open Space Sequence, was in a key position to advocate for, plan, and manage park improvements.[i]

"Adopt a Block"

The Steering Committee partnered with the Halprin Landscape Conservancy to develop an "Adopt a Block" program to further activate and improve the Halprin Open Space Sequence. Pettygrove Park was the first park to be improved with new drought-tolerant plant species, high efficiency irrigation, and organic amendments, with help from a nearby property owner.

Park Redesign and Activation

A PSU civil engineering senior design capstone project brought together student teams to evaluate the structural integrity and redesign potential of the Charles Moore structure at the west end of Lovejoy Fountain Park. Working with stakeholders from the SoMa Ecodistrict Steering Committee, Portland Parks and Recreation, and the Halprin Landscape Conservancy, student teams conducted 3-D engineering analyses, wind dynamics studies, and provided upgrade recommendations that would address stakeholder needs and concerns while preserving important cultural and historic features of the park.

Ongoing Improvements and Programming

SoMa Ecodistrict stakeholders are continuing their efforts to improve the quality and attractiveness of the Halprin Fountain Blocks. A PSU capstone class is working with SoMa to evaluate opportunities to improve stormwater management in Pettygrove Park. At Lovejoy Fountain, SoMa is exploring ways to encourage people to use the park as a gathering destination by developing a program of activities, such as events, music, and performances and creating seating areas to attract nearby 4th Avenue food cart visitors and invite community interaction. Both projects set out to improve and promote these parks as attractive, healthy urban spaces and important cultural resources of the community.

Events

The SoMa Ecodistrict has held several events, including a summer concert series in Pettygrove Park. SoMa partnered with a PSU senior capstone course and PSU's Campus Sustainability Office to plan and implement a "ReUse Fair." The campus community was asked to bring household goods, decor, dishes, clothes, books, office or school supplies, and any other reusable goods to the PSU Urban Plaza for donation. The fair also featured information on sustainable solutions, local initiatives, and SoMa Ecodistrict members.

Project Development: Projects Catalyzed by other Stakeholders

BUILDINGS

Lincoln Hall Seismic Upgrade and Tower Expansion Project

Led by the PSU Capital Construction Team, Lincoln Hall underwent several major upgrades, with work completed in 2011. It is now a LEED Platinum building. Windows were upgraded, efficiency improvements were made, and photovoltaic panels were installed, among other updates. The total cost of all upgrades was $30 million, with funding coming from the state and a local funder, Arlene Schnitzer.

Science Research and Teaching Center Infrastructure Upgrade, Modernization, and Expansion

This LEED Gold building, built originally in 1971, saw significant improvement including 25% Energy Savings, consolidation of mechanical equipment, and 189 new high-performance fume hoods. Led by IDC Architects and Hoffman Construction, this project was funded by a variety of sources and work was completed in 2011.

West Heating Plant Boiler Replacement

In 2014, the West Heating Plant, built in 1966, underwent a major upgrade to the boilers to more energy efficient 600 HP and 300 HP boilers, as well as infrastructure and loop redundancy improvements. The costs totaled $2.1 million and the project team included PSU, GHD, NBZ Consulting, and Heinz Mechanical.

INFRASTRUCTURE

Electric Avenue Demonstration Site

This initiative was launched in August of 2011 as a two-year project to learn about the interaction and performance of charging stations and a variety of electric vehicles starting to appear in the region. In April 2010, a partnership was created between PSU, Portland General Electric, and others to develop one of six national sites to test the new generation of Prius plug-in hybrid vehicles. Ten vehicles were deployed and evaluated at each site. Additonally, PSU was one of five test markets for the new Nissan Leaf electric car and ECOtality charging stations. Through this initiative, PSU's goal is to understand the charging preferences and travel patterns of EV visitors.[ii]

Montgomery Green Street

This multi-block plan, a partnership project between PSU, PDC and the Bureau of Environmental Services, aims to be Portland's most prominent green street, providing a pedestrian corridor, stormwater management infrastructure and educational opportunities, all amid a dense urban environment. Many of the project catchment areas are designed to absorb several times the immediate impervious area, providing stormwater management services to the surrounding district during storm events.[iii] Much of this work is yet to be completed, but sections have progressed. When completed, partners envision that the project will activate the neighborhood, improve the pedestrian experience, encourage sustainability, and continue to create and strengthen a sense of community identity.[iv]

Green Line Light Rail

In September 2009, the MAX Green Line light rail service opened between PSU and Clackamas Town Center. The university contributed $7 million to help bring the MAX line to campus, and campus leaders envisioned that it would attract more people to the university without adding cars or parking spaces.[v] The rail is instrumental both in the Ecodistrict and in the city, as it provides a much needed alternative commute option to both the PSU community and residents around the region who might use those new connections, thus reducing commute times and greenhouse gas emissions.

Broadway Cycle Track

The Broadway Cycle Track began as a pilot project in August 2009. On the right side of Broadway, the track runs from Clay Street to Jackson Street. It created a barrier between cyclists and cars by placing a separated bicycle lane in between the sidewalk and parked cars. The project was made permanent and in 2011 PSU received a Bike Friendly University Silver rating from the League of American Bicyclists.[vi]

COMMUNITY ACTION

Kilowatt Crackdown

Portland State University and a group of private SoMa property owners participated in Kilowatt Crackdown, an energy efficiency challenge among Portland-area building owners and managers to save energy and reduce operating costs. Owners and tenants received technical assistance to benchmark energy use, analyze savings opportunities, and identify improvements to building performance. Kilowatt Crackdown was sponsored by the Building Performance Partnership, a partnership between BOMA Oregon, NEEA's BetterBricks, City of Portland, Portland Development Commission, Energy Trust of Oregon, and Clark Public Utilities. The contest ran from January 2013 until May 2014.[vii]

Current Status

Since the official pilot program ended, the SoMa Ecodistrict has continued to move forward. What was once an ad-hoc steering committee has been converted into a formal Board of Directors with representative seats for business owners, students, PSU staff, and residents. The SoMa Ecodistrict has received 501(c)(3) status and is an official non-profit organization. PSU hired a graduate resource assistant for the past three years to add capacity for implementing the work plan, and the SoMa board is currently focused on advancing the following projects:

CONNECTIVITY AND PLACEMAKING

To enhance SoMA as an attractive destination for residents and visitors and to improve walkability and connectivity, the board is advancing a series of low-cost, high visibility projects. For the Halprin Open Space Sequence area, the board is prioritizing wayfinding, signage, and programming to better activate the area. To improve the retail experience along 4th Ave, they are planning a "parklet" in front of the popular food truck hub to enhance the customer experience and improve safety in a crowded area. The parklet has been designed by a PSU architecture professor and her students, and the board has received advanced permitting approval for the parklet. They have raised some funding and are about to launch a crowdfunding campaign with PSU in hopes of raising the remainder. It will be built in spring 2015.

RESEARCH AND STUDENT SUPPORT

PSU's Institute for Sustainable Solutions (ISS) recently launched a program called the Sustainable Neighborhoods Initiative (SNI) to connect students and faculty with community organizations in long-term partnerships to advance sustainability at the neighborhood scale and provide opportunities for research and scholarship for students and faculty. Through this initiative, four Portland neighborhood "partners," including three formal EcoDistricts projects, have been selected to receive assistance through SNI. Partners selected are the SoMa, Lloyd and Foster Green Ecodistricts, as well as the coalition of nonprofits working under the "Living Cully" banner.

One of the goals of SNI is to embed sustainability into the PSU curriculum. Over the summer of 2014, ISS held a workshop where faculty gathered to adapt their curriculum to advance SNI goals. In the fall of 2014, nine courses collaborated with all four of the SNI partners. The support included feasibility studies, planning and analysis, and community assessments. An additional ten courses will be providing project support in winter 2015, with more lined up for spring 2015.

In addition, through the SNI program, two projects (Foster Green and SoMa) were provided with a student coordinator at 20 hours per week. The role of the student coordinator is to work with ISS staff to leverage university assets to advance neighborhood sustainability goals, and to add needed capacity to the project. The coordinators report to both ISS and the partner steering committee chairs, creating a collaborative experience that maximizes resources and capacity. The funding for the SNI comes as part of a multi-year gift to PSU from the James F. and Marion L. Miller Foundation.

Another major goal of SNI is to increase the ability of community-university partnerships to make measurable impacts on local sustainability goals. ISS is assessing the impact that these sustainability projects are having on neighborhood partners, PSU faculty, and students through the dozens of projects that will be taking place in 2014-15.

The team is using a survey in the nine participating courses to start collecting data.

Lessons Learned

Several key lessons emerged from examining the process, projects, and overall progress of the South of Market Ecodistrict.

GOVERNANCE

Early governance efforts were focused on engaging a small handful of private property owners and as a consequence did not include key departments, faculty and student groups that represented important district-scale projects, and programs such as the Oregon Sustainability Center, Montgomery Green Street, Electric Avenue, and sustainability programming.

In addition, students, faculty and the neighborhood association were not originally invited to participate in the steering committee, missing an opportunity to build broad community support. Steering committee members noted that community ownership was a critical yet lacking a success factor. Holding more community-wide events and educational sessions may have helped create a stronger connection to local residents, students, and staff, and may have led to increased advocacy and support from these populations. Today, the board has broader representation.

PROJECT FUNDING

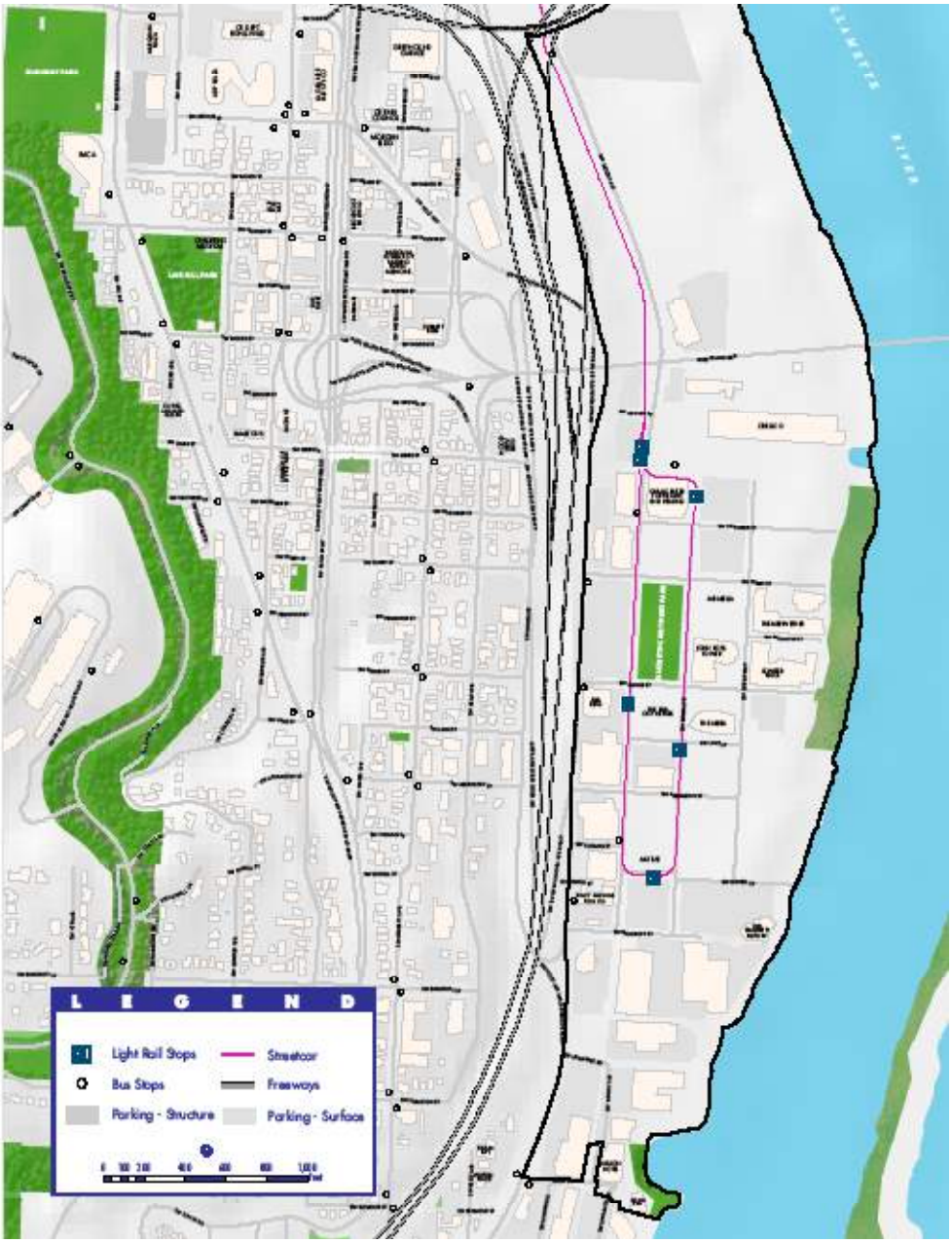
Project funding was identified as a major barrier to progress. However, a variety of district-scale projects sparked by the work around SoMa have been funded and progressed over the past five years from pre-feasibility for the Oregon Sustainability Center, to upgrades to PSU's district energy system, to improvements to the bike infrastructure. While they aren't captured or identified as SoMa projects, they do suggest that the work of establishing an EcoDistricts project generates broader momentum throughout the community, encouraging a wide variety of investments and innovation.

LEADERSHIP

While there is broad enthusiasm within PSU for the SoMa Ecodistrict, it has suffered from a lack of internal alignment and champions across the administration and key departments. There are many sustainability initiatives underway and the SoMa Ecodistrict has been unable to synthesize efforts into a comprehensive whole.

The newly created University District Urban Renewal Area[viii] provides an important opportunity to advance cutting-edge district projects that meet the goals of the SoMa Ecodistrict. With over $169 million allocated to district projects over the next 30 years, PSU has an opportunity to position the SoMa Ecodistrict as the key governance body to manage all district related investments. Such a reorientation would provide an opportunity to integrate the myriad active and proposed plans into a single Ecodistrict Roadmap and create a mechanism to report regular progress against key city and university policies (including the EcoDistricts Performance Areas).

SOUTH WATERFRONT



At a Glance

TOTAL AREA	153.5 ACRES
TOTAL POPULATION	891 RESIDENTS
MEDIAN AGE	46.1
TOTAL EMPLOYEES	1,125
PER CAPITA INCOME	$57,962
TOTAL AREA OF BUILDINGS	934,630 SF
% RESIDENTIAL	26%
% COMMERCIAL	31%
% INSTITUTIONAL	4%
# LEED CERTIFIED BUILDINGS	9

Project Summary

South Waterfront is a former 120-acre industrial site that is being redeveloped as a high-density, mixed-use urban neighborhood anchored by Oregon Health and Science University's (OHSU) river campus. Part of the North Macadam Urban Renewal Area, designated in 1999, the City partnered with OHSU, the City's largest employer and two development companies — Williams and Dame and Gerding Edlen — to develop the first phase of development between 1999–2008. Due to the site's limited connectivity to the rest of the central city, the project prioritized multi-modal transportation investments including a tram between the South Waterfront and OHSU's original hilltop campus, streetcar, light rail (including a new bridge connecting the district to the eastside), and a cycle track. Other highlights include an integrated green building plan (per the development agreement, all buildings must be LEED Silver certified) and green infrastructure strategy to manage stormwater and improve habitat functionality along the Willamette River for salmon.

With the launch of the Ecodistrict initiative, South Waterfront was identified as a priority project since there was a new wave of investments being planned for the district's north area, and the ability to engage the new residents to advance "operational" sustainability activities. South Waterfront was seen as a place to advance "next-generation" district-scale infrastructure investments that could attract private capital and partners.

Key Activities

GOVERNANCE

PoSI worked with South Waterfront Community Relations (SWCR) to shape strategy and governance. SWCR was a natural partner as they were formed as a quasi-formal neighborhood association to direct community-building events and transportation management projects throughout the district. With funding from an annual property assessment of all residential properties within the district and Metro (it was one of a few official Transportation Demand Management Associations in the city), SWCR seemed primed and ready to lead the pilot because of their governance structure, funding, staff capacity, and representation of many of the district's stakeholders.

In 2011, PoSI and SWCR signed a Memorandum of Understanding, and began forming a steering committee. Members included residents, property owners in the central district, OHSU and Zidell Realty.

ASSESSMENT

To kick off the project, PoSI worked with SWCR to convene two workshops in October 2011 with the city and district stakeholders to define a vision, adopt goals, and then develop project priorities to achieve goals. A consultant was hired to do an in-depth assessment of the South Waterfront project opportunities. As a result of this process, the following projects were identified as top priorities for the district:

1. Existing buildings' energy efficiency
2. Integrated infrastructure plan for the north district, including district energy
3. Green building performance standards for new buildings
4. Demand management, smart grid strategy
5. Interim improvements to the South Waterfront greenway
6. Integrated food and habitat strategy, including finding a permanent home for a community garden
7. Bike sharing

After these areas were identified as priorities, PoSI worked with core steering committee members to do one-on-one interviews with local stakeholders to assess the feasibility of a smart grid strategy. A PSU student conducted research using building data and concluded that since the new buildings were operating with a high level of efficiency, the investment in smart grid technology would not be cost effective.

District Energy

PoSI led a study to determine the viability of district energy and water. This study concluded that there was an excellent business case for district energy in the neighborhood and that it could provide environmental and cost benefits compared to how normal HVAC systems operate. In pursuing the next phase of feasibility, PoSI submitted a grant application for Woody Biomass Utilization.

A district solar site analysis was completed for South Waterfront, as well as the four other pilots. The analysis concluded that the district has 10,585,623 square feet of usable solar rooftop area.

Climate Positive Partnership

In 2011, the north district of the South Waterfront Ecodistrict was accepted as one of 18 global projects to commit to the C40 Cities Climate Positive Development Framework, a program created by the Clinton Foundation to encourage large-scale sustainable urban development. A rigorous assessment was completed to establish a baseline and determine scenarios to achieve climate neutral goals. A diverse team, led by PoSI, included government representatives and consultants who helped shape scenarios that could potentially achieve the rigorous goal set by the program. A climate positive outcome is planned for SoWa by 2035 through a combination of on-site strategies and supplemental Climate Positive credits.

Three scenarios were created for the Climate Positive Roadmap to help guide the project's approach to a climate positive outcome. A development baseline has been set, with the project expecting to produce 51,837 metric tons of CO2-eq per year. Two resource efficient scenarios have been designed that incorporate a range of low-carbon strategies across building, district, and regional scales. A plan of emissions reduction has also been developed projecting out to 2035, the date at which the plan is planned to be fully operational in working towards its climate positive goals.

The Climate Positive process included the scoping of a range of off-site but related local and regional strategies that could contribute to the climate positive outcomes for the project. Some strategies were promising enough that the City of Portland has taken a lead in further screening and reviewing the feasibility of potentially transformative projects and policy changes.

Project Development: Projects Initiated by Other Stakeholders

BUILDINGS

Collaborative Life Sciences Building

This new building in South Waterfront brings together OHSU, Oregon State University, and Portland State University all into the same building. The new space offers innovative and shared work spaces, research labs, and work stations that serve chemistry, biology, and biochemistry students at each of these schools. The cost of building this state of the art 650,000 square foot building was $295 million. Completed in 2014, the building adds much-needed academic and research space to these institutions, connects South Waterfront to the institutions and helps to build South Waterfront's identity as a place for cutting-edge development. [ix]

Gray's Landing – Reach Affordable Housing project

Gray's Landing is an affordable housing project that was developed in the South Waterfront district. The first affordable rental project in the district, it provides housing to households earning 60% of Median Family Income. Forty-two of the apartments are dedicated to veterans.[x] The City of Portland's $28.67 million investment in Gray's Landing included local Tax Increment Financing (TIF) from the North Macadam Urban Renewal Area, as well as the land. Their investment helped leverage total investments of $21.77 million. Gray's Landing is located on the Portland Streetcar line. Veterans and commuters can easily connect to jobs and services, such as the Veteran's Affairs Medical Center (VA) via the Portland Streetcar.

The Emery

The Emery building, opened in 2013, offers 118 multi-family rental units conveniently located next to a streetcar line, the Willamette River, and major employer, OHSU. Designed by ZGF Architects, the $20 million project also features six retail spots that increased economic activity to the area and enhanced the pedestrian experience. The Emery has attracted new residents to the area with its clean, modern design and amenities and brings the site's shipyard history to life with its industrial aesthetic.[xi]

Ardea

This 30-story building is LEED Gold certified and features 323 apartments and 33 townhomes. The site near the Willamette River maximizes the benefits of its location with pedestrian plazas, vertical gardens and access to the Greenway. It was designed by GBD Architects and developed by Gerding Edlen.[xii]

Riva on the Park

This luxury high-rise building is currently being developed by Sims Luxury Buildings of Houston, TX. It has been designed and engineered to gain a LEED Gold rating. The building features an eco-roof with native plantings and a stormwater detention system. It is estimated to open in Summer 2016 and will add 22 multi-family condos to the community. The developer claims that the building will be 35% more energy efficient than code and 40% more water efficient than code.[xiii]

INFRASTRUCTURE

South Waterfront Greenway

The South Waterfront Greenway, stretches from the Marquam Bridge south to the River Forum Building and is part of a wide network of almost 40 miles of greenways and trails that connect residents to different parts of the city. It aims to balance the needs of the public and the health of the Willamette River. The City's South Waterfront Plan called for a system of parks that weave together to create neighborhood vibrancy, catalyze development activity and provide opportunities for recreation and physical activity. The first phase of the project started in 2012 and involved reconstructing the riverbank and improving fish habitat. This phase cost $10.8 million. In 2014, $4.7 million in funding from the City was approved for the second phase of the project. This work, which is currently underway, includes a bike and pedestrian path, the installation of lighting and seating, river overlooks, and landscaping.[xiv]

Moody Multi-Modal Project

Southwest Moody Street serves as the major connecting corridor between downtown and the South Waterfront District. In 2011, the corridor re-opened, featuring three new traffic lanes, dual streetcar tracks and a 16-foot-wide separated path for pedestrians and cyclists. PDC and the Bureau of Transportation received over $23 million in TIGER federal grant funds to redevelop Moody (between SW River Parkway and Gibbs) as a green street for managing stormwater and improving watershed health, as part of its transportation infrastructure overhaul. South Waterfront is home to many employees who commute from other areas of the city, as well as residents who commute into the downtown area of Portland.[xv]

Hooley Pedestrian and Bicycle Bridge

The Hooley Pedestrian Bridge opened in 2012 and reconnects the Lair Hill neighborhood to the Willamette River and South Waterfront District. In the past few decades, transportation infrastructure projects have divided the once cohesive neighborhood into isolated pieces. The project was a crucial east-west connector that began the process of providing access between OHSU and other South Waterfront destinations to the adjacent neighborhood.[xvi]

Tilikum Crossing

Tilikum Crossing, also called "Bridge of the People," is a new bridge slated to open in September 2015. Costing an estimated $134.6 million, it is designed to carry only buses, light rail, streetcar, cyclists and pedestrians, and not private motor vehicles. It will be the longest carless transit bridge in the United States. The project is significant, not only to the district, but to the city and the region as it provides an east-west connector for the new Portland-Milwaukie Light Rail line, improving access to and from South Waterfront and downtown for commuters.[xvii]

District Stormwater

The City of Portland, led by BES, received an EPA grant to partner with Zidell Realty to explore district stormwater options for the 30-acre Zidell property. This study identified three possible solutions that treated stormwater at various integrated levels and mixed public and private green infrastructure that use surface conveyance to protect contaminated soils. These three potential types of system are (i) a "Diffuse and Embedded System," which is described as a system that collects, conveys, and treats stormwater adjacent to where it falls through an integrated network of techniques including, but not limited to eco-roofs, porous paving, and small-scale vegetated facilities and (ii) a "Clustered and Distinct System" or (iii) "Central and Focused System" which are both systems that collect, convey and treat stormwater in a centralized method on either a sub-district or district scale. The South Waterfront North District Development Agreement, currently under negotiation, includes a District Stormwater element where partners will continue to explore the viability of a district system.

District Energy

As part of the Portland-Milwaukie Light Rail project, PDC funded the installation of casings under Porter Street at its intersection with Bond Avenue. These casings are intended for the future installation of pipes affiliated with a to-be-determined District Energy System. The South Waterfront North District Development Agreement, currently under negotiation, includes a District Energy element where partners will continue to explore the viability of a district system together with OHSU.

COMMUNITY ACTION

Community Garden

In 2009, South Waterfront residents, in partnership with South Waterfront Community Relations, founded a community garden on a vacant lot. The lot was purchased in 2013 and slated for development, but a new site has been identified and will be home to 45 raised bed gardens. This project strengthens the sense of neighborhood identity in the district, as well as providing opportunities for healthy eating and active living.[xviii]

Farmers Market

In 2012, South Waterfront Community Relations started a farmers market to make connections between farmers and community members, and catalyze community activity in the district. The market operates weekly June through October.[xix]

Current Status

The South Waterfront Ecodistrict Steering Committee was disbanded in 2013 and all "ecodistrict" related projects are being advanced through the leadership of the PDC, the Bureau of Panning and Sustainability, and individual project investors. The Climate Positive partnership is on hold, as is the district utility strategy. However, OHSU is committed to linking their buildings to a district system in the future. The South Waterfront Community Relations, the anchor community association, continues to focus on transportation management and community-building initiatives including the farmers market, community garden, and sustainability awareness and education.

Lessons Learned

GOVERNANCE

The South Waterfront Ecodistrict could have benefited from a two-tiered governance strategy — one focused on engaging the existing neighborhood taking shape in the area's central area and another to guide the redevelopment of the north that was owned by OHSU (20 acres) and Zidell Realty (30 acres). Each area had different opportunities and leadership, making it difficult to bring together under a single MOU. The northern district was going through planning development of major infrastructure projects including the new Green Line MAX extension, Collaborative Life Sciences Building, rebuilding of SW Moody St and Tilikum Crossing, while the central district was focused on engaging existing building owners and tenants.

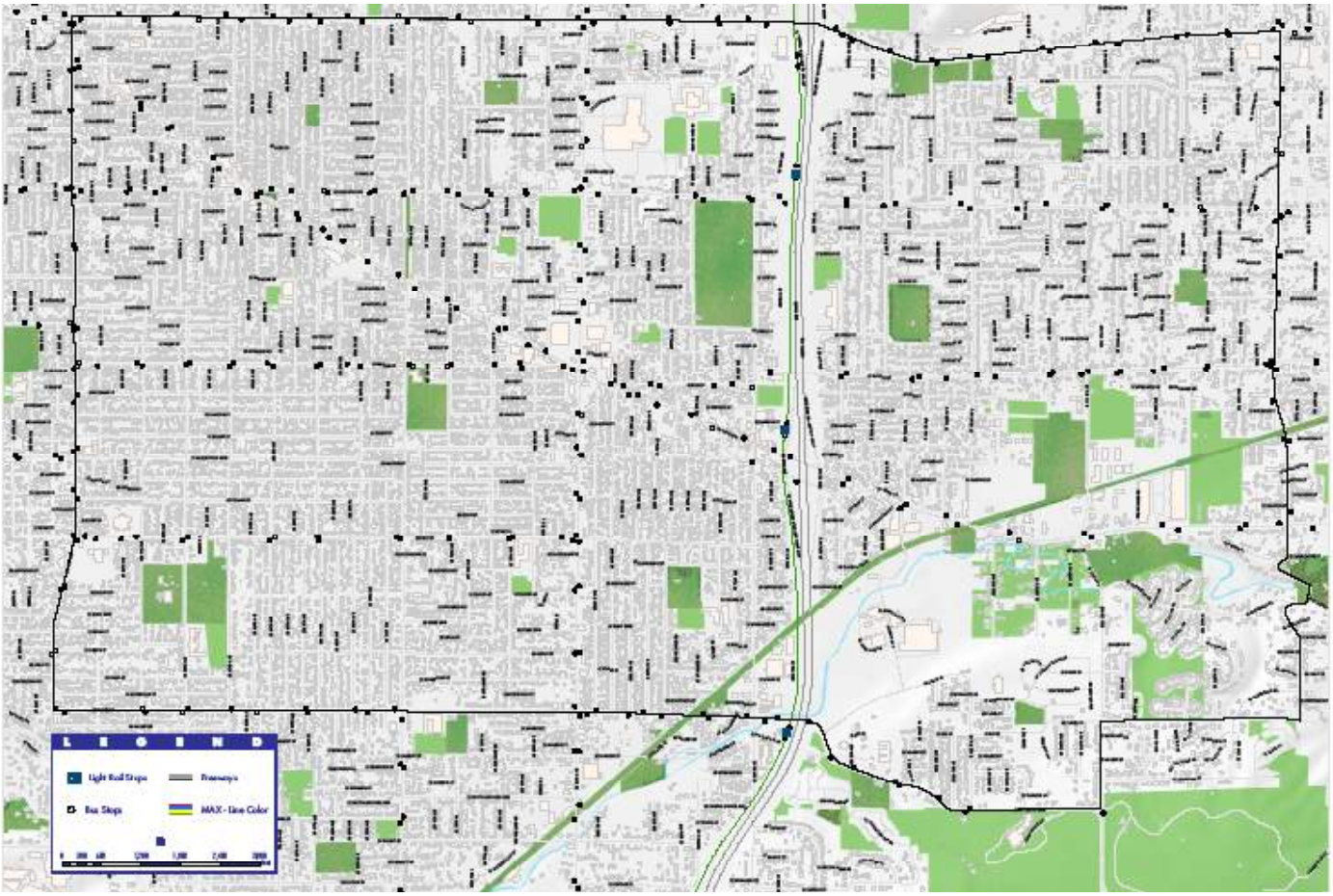
LEADERSHIP ALIGNMENT

While at first glance the South Waterfront Community Relations organization seemed like the right organization to lead the Ecodistrict pilot, several barriers kept them from pursuing strong leadership, including organizational alignment and funding. SWCR was set up as a Transportation Management Association and homeowners association. Their funding had to be used directly towards transportation-related outcomes and facilitate interconnectedness among residents. SWCR determined that driving a broader sustainability agenda was beyond their mandate and resources.

COMPREHENSIVE SUSTAINABILITY METRICS ARE NEEDED TO ADVANCE PROJECTS

While South Waterfront is guided by a strong set of planning requirements and multi modal transportation, green building, and public realm investments that enhance walkability, stormwater management, and riparian habitat investments, there isn't a set of comprehensive sustainability metrics and targets helping to shape future investments. The Climate Positive Partnership with C40 was an attempt to kick-start such an effort, with an emphasis on setting a carbon neutral target for the northern part of the district. After initial modeling and consultation between the City, EcoDistricts, Zidell Realty and OHSU, the effort lost momentum.

FOSTER-GREEN (LENTS)



At a Glance

TOTAL AREA	4,508 ACRES
TOTAL POPULATION	48,141 RESIDENTS
MEDIAN AGE	36.3
TOTAL EMPLOYEES	7,825
PER CAPITA INCOME	$21,885
TOTAL AREA OF BUILDINGS	29,477,299 SF
% RESIDENTIAL	80%
% COMMERCIAL	6%
% INSTITUTIONAL	6%
# LEED CERTIFIED BUILDINGS	0

PROJECT SUMMARY

The Foster Green neighborhood is the most demographically diverse of the five Portland pilot projects. Once connected to downtown Portland via streetcar, the neighborhood is now split by Interstate 205, which inhibits social connectivity and mobility for residents and businesses. The Foster Green Ecodistrict describes the area that includes parts of the Foster-Powell, Mt. Scott Arleta, Brentwood-Darlington, Lents, Powellhurst-Gilbert and Pleasant Valley neighborhoods in southeast Portland within the Foster Road corridor. These neighborhoods in the Foster corridor are part of a historic community, once connected to downtown Portland via streetcar in the late 1800s. The geography lies partly within the Lents Town Center Urban Renewal Area and encompasses a mix of uses, including residential, industrial, and commercial lands.

A portion of the district is located in the Johnson Creek watershed, notably featuring acres of important floodplain, sensitive wildlife habitat and a section of a valuable urban stream, Johnson Creek. Many of the planning efforts in recent years have emphasized renewing the district's historic identity, socioeconomic development, growing family wage jobs, developing affordable housing, improving access to green space, and public safety. The area was identified as an Ecodistrict pilot because of the extensive planning that has already taken place and the significant public investments the city has made through urban renewal and floodplain restoration. There are many opportunities for sustainability strategies to address a number of community needs in this district.

Key Activities

GOVERNANCE

The Foster Green area is larger than the other pilot districts and has a very different set of stakeholders including small businesses, neighborhood associations, local organizations, and residents. In addition, these stakeholders have experienced years of public planning processes without the outcomes intended. This has led to skepticism in the community towards engagement processes by the city or outside organizations.

Because of this context, in October 2010, PoSI hired two part-time community organizers to lead the engagement process, with funding from the Bullitt Foundation. Due to the complexity of the area and the stakeholders, PoSI, the City of Portland, and the organizers utilized a phased engagement process that included the following steps:

1. Engagement to form steering committee (November 2010-February 2011)

2. Engagement to create vision (March 2011-August 2011)

3. Engagement to create governance structure (March 2011-August 2011)

The idea behind this engagement process was, "Go slow now so we can go fast later." PoSI, the City of Portland, and community stakeholders felt that dedicating the time, energy, and staff capacity to the community engagement process would fully enable quicker results with more community support later on.

In Phase I, with the leadership and capacity of the two community organizers, a stakeholder list of 200 organizations was drafted, and one-on-one interviews were conducted to help create a sense of ownership over the process among community stakeholders and build trust between partners. The organizers completed research on existing engagement and visioning exercises that had already been done by other organizations, including those that represent minority populations. This step was essential because it created a standard for work being plugged into existing community efforts and built off of work previously completed. Through this process, effective engagement strategies were identified such as outreach through existing events, youth outreach, website marketing, posters, door-to-door outreach, and personal relationship building.

A formal steering committee was formed in the spring of 2011. "Listening sessions" were held and enabled the team to come up with a unified list of values for the Ecodistrict:

- Use Existing Assets
- Equity and Justice
- Strong Neighborhoods
- Natural Environment
- Resilience

These sessions, in addition to the one-on-one interviews, contributed to an increased awareness about the Ecodistrict pilot program in the community, as well as building a sense of community ownership over the initiative. This method of outreach provided insights into the challenges that the community was experiencing, as well as opportunities to collaborate more intentionally to advance future district investments.

In August 2011, a Memorandum of Understanding was signed by partners. A governance structure was also adopted in August that allowed for flexibility, making it possible for new members to be added over time as they had the capacity or interest. A 3-5 member coordinating committee would oversee logistics and oversight of the committee.

Foster Lents Integration Partnership

In 2010, several City of Portland bureaus and PoSI joined forces with a grant proposal that would unify individual initiatives in Foster Green towards a specific sustainable infrastructure and economic development strategy. PoSI's role in the grant, called Foster Lents Integration Partnership Strategy (FLIP) was to shape a sustainable infrastructure strategy for the Foster Green EcoDistrict and refine the scope so that the EcoDistricts concept would be a driving vision behind both the process and the sustainability work. In addition, the Foster Green Ecodistrict Advisory Committee acted as the community advisory group for FLIP. The FLIP process was groundbreaking in the City of Portland as an effective public engagement process and lead to the first corridor specific investment strategy for the Foster Corridor. The effort was eventually merged with the Lents Five Year Action Plan that the City Council adopted in May 2014.

ASSESSMENT

Funded by the City of Portland's Development Commission, a team of consultants was hired to complete an in-depth integrated sustainability assessment in the Foster Green Ecodistrict and the Gateway Ecodistrict areas. The team comprised experts from SERA Architects, Brightworks, and Puttman Infrastructure. The goal of these specific assessment processes was to provide performance baseline and project recommendations while meeting the technical demands of PoSI's Assessment Method, which was previously developed with experts and a technical advisory committee and based on best practices in assessment.

The assessment was completed in five months from November 2011 to March 2012. Using the data, the consultant team determined a set of recommendations based on the following criteria: technical feasibility; improvement of community/sense of place; contribution to Ecodistrict identity; and Foster Green Ecodistrict values. A policy review was also performed by City of Portland staff to determine if any current city reports held metrics that were relevant to the Foster Green Ecodistrict.

Recommended projects and strategies addressed both software systems (community-led programs) and hardware systems (buildings and infrastructure) and focused on all eight-performance areas. A solar site analysis was completed for the Foster Green area and it was found that the area has significant solar energy potential: 2,178,489 square feet of usable solar rooftop area.

Project Development: Projects Catalyzed by the Pilot Process

INFRASTRUCTURE

Bike Infrastructure Enhancements How To Guide

In late 2012, led by the projects identified in the Roadmap, PoSI developed a business plan for the Foster Green Ecodistrict. This specific plan explored the concept and development of bike infrastructure enhancements through a "How-To" guide. PoSI worked with the Foster Green steering committee, Portland Bureau of Transportation, OPAL Environmental Justice Oregon, and the Bicycle Transportation Alliance to gather information on gaps, potential strategies, enhancements, and costs. Through the How-To guides, potential implementation locations, funding sources, process, and partners were presented for each strategy.

COMMUNITY ACTION

Park Planning

The Foster Green steering committee led the community in a master planning process for a new urban park that would serve as a gathering space for the neighborhood, and a catalyst for redevelopment along the Foster Road corridor. The park plan, called Laurelwood Park, was approved by the city but awaits funding.[xx]

Alley Allies

The biggest priority for the steering committee since the end of PoSI's involvement has been place-making. A team of Portland State University students recently led a project to re-activate some of the alleyways in the area. The students worked with steering committee members to create prototype designs for repurposing the alleys and then held events to do outreach for their vision. One alley has already been transformed.

BUILDINGS

Mercado

The Mercado is a social enterprise incubator program that has broken ground in the Foster-Lents area of Southeast Portland. The initiative, coordinated by Hacienda Community Development Corporation (Hacienda CDC) aims to reduce barriers to Portland's immigrant entrepreneurs while also providing a community and educational space. It will offer a commercial food-prep kitchen, as well as training, and 400 units of affordable housing.[xxi] The 39,005 square foot site, was leased to Hacienda Community Development Corporation by PDC for $1.00 and they have the option to purchase the property at a mutually agreed upon price, if the PDC loans have been paid off. So far, PDC has invested over $1 million in the project, and Hacienda CDC has received other state and federal grants and loans as well. The project will add a much-needed cultural center to the Latino community in the district and city, and will provide assistance and opportunity for entrepreneurs in the district who might not otherwise have access to these resources.[xxii]

Boys and Girls Club Expansion

The Wattles Boys and Girls Club of SE Portland has undergone significant expansion and improvements to its building since 2001. The work included a commercial stormwater retrofit to the site, as well as an expansion to its building and community and youth-focused programming and services.

SE Works

Funded by a Community Livability Grant from PDC, SE Works was able to expand its building and its programs and services. SE Works is a non-profit whose mission is to engage low income, underserved populations, including: at-risk youth involved in the justice system; unemployed adults; immigrants; people experiencing disabilities; and people returning from incarceration. Their services include career counseling, skills training, workshops, and youth programming. Since 2010, PDC has provided $163,726 in grants to SE Works expanding its operations, and the organization is now the largest non-profit employer in SE Portland. The expansion of this building was said to have spurred other revitalization in the 82nd Avenue area and attracted new businesses.[xxiii]

PDC's Community Livability Grant, established in 2006, has awarded nearly $3 million in grants ranging from $5,000 to $50,000. The program aims to foster vibrant and healthy neighborhoods within the Interstate Corridor, Lents Town Center, and Gateway Regional Center Urban Renewal Areas. Grants are for real property improvements to public facilities and neighborhood and cultural amenities that meet the needs and honor the diversity of area residents.[xxiv]

Urban Grange

In 2014, Zenger Farm, a non-profit urban farm in SE Portland, broke ground on the Urban Grange, a 6,660 square foot multipurpose classroom, workspace and commercial kitchen. The farm already hosts 7,000 students each year for field trips, runs a successful farmers market, and operates youth programming, and hosts cooking workshops to encourage healthy living in the area. But this new expansion will offer additional courses and learning opportunities and double the amount of people the farm is able to serve. The farm plays an important role as an educational, economic, and environmental resource in the district.[xxv]

Mt. Scott Learning Center

The Mt. Scott Learning Center is a non-profit education center that serves students who have dropped out of high school or are at-risk of dropping out. Since 2009, PDC has partnered with the organization to renovate a church at 65th and Foster, a significant historic building along the Foster Corridor in the Lents Town Center urban renewal area. The project was funded by multiple grants from PDC's Community Livability Grant program as well as other sources. The exterior was renovated and energy efficiency was improved, among other improvements. More than 150 students, faculty, and staff comprise the Mt. Scott Learning Center community.

Early Learning Center

In September 2014, an Early Learning Center wing opened at the Earl Boyles Elementary School in SE Portland. This $7 million dollar renovation was a collaboration between the school district and the non-profit, the Children's Institute. The project, which features a parent education center, will engage the parent population and prioritize serving the many families who experience barriers to involvement, including but not limited to language.

Project Development: Projects Initiated by Other Stakeholders

INFRASTRUCTURE

SE 122nd Ave. Enhancements

The City has invested over $228,000 into renovations along 122nd Avenue in SE Portland. The project incorporated two different zones – Ramona to Foster and Foster to Holgate. It involved the purchase of Right-Of-Way in several areas and focused on improving pedestrian connections overall. Specifically, pedestrian crossings with curb extensions were installed, as well as marked crosswalks and median refuge islands.

Local Improvement District on SE 118th

In 2011, City Council and local property owners formed a Local Improvement District on SE 118th Avenue to fund needed improvements to the street infrastructure in the area. Funding came from tax increment funds from the Lents Town Center Urban Renewal Area. The improvements that have been made to date include new paving, stormwater infrastructure, tree plantings, and sidewalk improvements.

Foster-Woodstock Town Center Streetscape

Funded by a federal grant and Lents Town Center Urban Renewal District money, $4.5 million dollars has been invested in the Foster-Woodstock Town Center Streetscape Project. The work, completed in 2013 included widening existing sidewalks to 12 feet, installing street trees and pedestrian scale street lighting, improving SE Foster/91st Avenue intersection to improve circulation and safety, enhancing pedestrian crossings in several locations, increasing on-street parking, and improving access to the Lents light rail station.

An in-depth community engagement and master planning process was also completed for the 50th – 82nd section of Foster. In 2008, this section of the road was added to the Lents Town Center Urban Renewal area in the city's efforts to spur revitalization in this area. The plans, approved in 2014, include traffic calming elements to the street, pedestrian enhancements, infrastructure for cyclists, stormwater features, traffic signal changes, improved transit services and facilities, and improved access to connections for all modes.

The investments made to improving this area of the district are critical, as it is expected that by 2035 up to 3,300 more households, 7,000 more residents, and 2,100 more jobs will exist within a quarter mile of Foster Road.[xxvi]

COMMUNITY ACTION

Lents Town Center

Lents Town Center, established as an Urban Renewal Area by City Council in 1998, is seeing focused and strategic investment by the city. It is the second largest URA in Portland at 2,800 acres and includes six distinct neighborhoods, three separate business districts, an accessible town center, and is one of the most ethnically diverse areas in Portland. Over $90 million has been invested by the city towards infrastructure and facilities, redevelopment, business development, transportation, and affordable housing. A strategic approach to development is currently underway with leadership from the Portland Development Commission.

Green Streets Enhancements

Green Lents is entering year two of a pilot project with the City of Portland's Bureau of Environmental Services to enhance three large bioswale facilities. The enhancement will replace some grass areas planted for infiltration purposes to include pollinator habitat with a diversity of native beneficial plants. The community and youth are actively involved in this project and specific partners include Lents Elementary and Portland State University. The success of the project is being monitored through December 15 2015 with the hopes of expansion to nearby bioswale facilities in 2016. Green Lents plans to expand its pollinator habitat program to other sites outside of the bioswales in the Lents Green Ring to create a connected habitat loop throughout the neighborhood.

Annual Johnson Creek Cleanup

Green Lents, along with the Johnson Creek Watershed Council and the Overland Park Coalition, holds an annual cleanup in August, clearing out trash from inside Johnson Creek. Each year, the event draws over 100 volunteers, removes three to five tons of trash from the creek, and is funded through a variety of small grants and in kind donations. The event is fiscally sponsored by the Watershed Council.

Malden Community Orchard

Located at the intersection of SE 87th Avenue and the Springwater Corridor Trail (part of Olmsted's 40-mile loop), a city-owned vacant lot is slated to be transformed into a community orchard with a multi-layered canopy permaculture approach that will increase food production and establish wildlife habitat. The project, set to break ground in 2015, is a partnership between Green Lents, Friends of Malden Court Community Orchard, Rose CDC, City of Portland Bureau of Planning & Sustainability, Portland State University, Foster Green Ecodistrict, and Ecology in Classrooms and Outdoors (ECO), among other partners. The project will add important community space and contribute to the food security of this low-income, and historically underserved, area of Portland. The city provided financial support through a Community Watershed Stewardship Grant, as well as project planning and siting support.[xxvii]

Clean Energy Works

The Clean Energy Works program provides free home energy assessments and low-cost financing for energy efficiency updates for homes in Portland. PDC has made a specific investment to marketing and funding this initiative in the Lents Urban Renewal Area.

The program is available citywide, with extra funding and marketing in the Interstate and Lents URAs. So far, more than 60 loans have been disbursed in the district as part of this program.

Leach Botanical Gardens Improvements

Over $1 million in investment has been given to Leach Botanical Garden by different departments of the city in order to plan, design, and implement a major expansion of the grounds. The improvements will prioritize pedestrian and vehicle access projects, as well as specifically improving ADA access. The additional 1.36 acres will give more people the opportunity to experience the botanical garden, take classes, and participate in events. The garden prides itself on being a respite from the busy urban life outside of its boundaries. It offers essential green space amenities to district and city residents.[xxviii]

Foster Natural Areas Floodplain

The Foster Natural Areas Floodplain was completed and open to the public in 2013. After years of chronic flooding, the city invested in $20 million in acquiring homes in this area, demolishing the homes and renewing the floodplain area. The buy-out process was optional but residents were encouraged to move through city funds and grants. Over 60 homes were purchased and land-banked over the course of 15 years and the work was completed in stages. The project prioritized preserving fish and wildlife habitat, as well as using recycling materials taken from the site. It is estimated that the project should reduce flooding incidents by at least half.[xxix]

Community Tool Library

Green Lents, and other community stakeholders opened a Community Tool Library in 2012 to loan tools to community members and provide access to a seed library and do-it-yourself workshops. Of the four operating tool libraries in Portland, the Community Tool Library is the only tool library serving neighborhoods in East Portland. They are currently seeking a permanent location and building a long-term volunteer program.

Current Status

The steering committee is still active with several of the original partners meeting regularly. In 2014, Foster Green solidified a partnership with PSU's Institute for Sustainable Solutions and through the Sustainable Neighborhood Initiative were able to hire a graduate student coordinator to boost capacity. With the added time and energy of this coordinator, the steering committee is hoping to re-ignite stakeholder enthusiasm for the ecodistrict vision, leading to acceleration of projects getting jointly funded and off the ground quickly. However, a small leadership team, lack of funding and paid staff time continue to pose challenges. Since the end of the pilot, Foster Green has shifted focus from large infrastructure projects to equity-oriented grassroots projects that empower and engage residents.

In November 2014, a coalition of organizations, facilitated by Confluence Environmental Center, received a large grant from a private foundation to fund an AmeriCorps Fellow to work toward the Foster Green Ecodistrict goals.

Two other local organizations, ROSE Community Development Corporation and OPAL Environmental Justice Oregon are implementing a Green Team initiative – a youth development program funded by Bullitt for the Green Ring. The Green Ring is a focal area in the Ecodistrict that encompasses a ring of multi-modal transportation corridors surrounding the Lents Town Center. Multiple projects are underway including the Malden Court Community Orchard and other green infrastructure improvements.

Lessons Learned

GOVERNANCE TAKES TIME

The Lents URA and Foster Green Ecodistrict catchment area is large and diverse. There is no one organization or coalition of organizations driving sustainability in the area and, as a consequence, governance is difficult to solidify. PoSI engaged, with the help of the founder of Green Lents and a respected community engagement consultant, a mostly youthful set of emerging grassroots leaders that saw the pilot project as an opportunity to connect and galvanize a range of community-based organizations that were separately working towards related goals in an uncoordinated fashion. The pilot has helped to connect an emerging network of local leaders to advance a community driven sustainability strategy and to advocate for support and resources from the city and other key allies.

GOVERNANCE NEEDS TO BE FLEXIBLE, ADAPTABLE, AND ACCESSIBLE

From the beginning of the Foster Green Ecodistrict process, stakeholders valued an inclusive process that would enable staff from different organizations to join the steering committee and for others to leave depending on their priorities, staffing capacity, and schedules. While in some cases steady commitment might be high priority to successfully deliver projects, in others it may be necessary to allow for this adaptable governance structure. In addition, there is rotating leadership in the group where the two chairs each serve a two-year term. This enables responsibility and power to shift over time.

FURTHER CAPACITY BUILDING IS NEEDED

Foster Green is diverse and transient. It requires a deeper level of engagement among its residents and key business leaders to build the momentum required to advance projects. A dedicated staff member to provide stable coordination for the working group or steering committee is essential for success. Without someone's push to keep things moving, members may become disinterested in continued meetings without seeing tangible results.

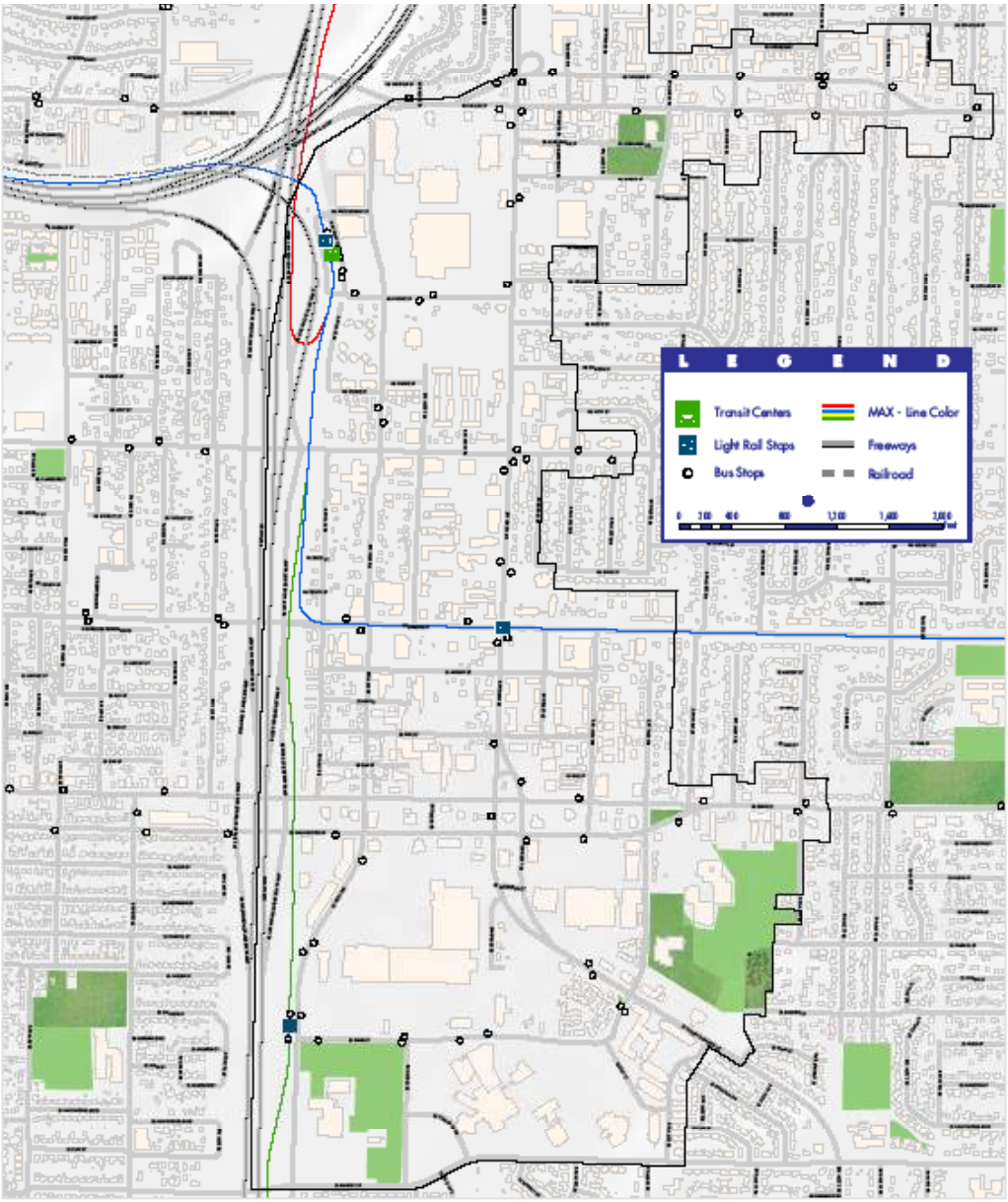
SMALL SCALE PROJECTS CAN BE CATALYSTS

Without large infrastructure and real state projects to advance the goals of Foster Green, smaller projects become important symbols of the importance of a comprehensive approach. Smaller projects and focal areas provide the basis for advancing larger, cohesive efforts. For instance the Green Ring concept has united multiple organizations to focus their efforts in one part of the Ecodistrict around the Lents Town Center and implement green infrastructure projects using diverse methods and capitalizing on each organization's unique skill sets. Hacienda's Mercado is part of a larger healthy food, well-being and economic development strategy for the area. Pedestrian crossing improvements and new bus shelters are part of a multi modal transportation strategy that takes time to materialize.

ASSESSMENT PROCESS NEEDS TO HEAVILY ENGAGE COMMUNITY

The assessment process was a challenging one for the Foster Green steering committee. The five-month process led by Sera Architects and PoSI, caused some stakeholders to lose steam without seeing tangible results during that time and leaders felt it was too overwhelming and all-encompassing. For a successful assessment process, the community needs to be actively engaged and invested in the process. The specific history, context, and desires of the community should be the starting point in any good assessment, and small-scale, catalytic projects can offer a tangible way to keep residents engaged while baselining performance by collecting and analyzing data.

GATEWAY


LEGEND
Transit Centers
Light Rail Stops
Bus Stops
MAX - Line Color
Freeways
Railroad

At a Glance

TOTAL AREA	658.5 ACRES
TOTAL POPULATION	6,390 RESIDENTS
MEDIAN AGE	34.5
TOTAL EMPLOYEES	7,000
PER CAPITA INCOME	$22,321
TOTAL AREA OF BUILDINGS	2,322,595 SF
% RESIDENTIAL	32%
% COMMERCIAL	47%
% INSTITUTIONAL	10%
# LEED CERTIFIED BUILDINGS	2

Project Summary

The Gateway Regional Center Urban Renewal Area is at the intersection of major nodes of regional transit and two major highways, which are significant crossroads that link the Portland metropolitan region. The area includes portions of the Hazelwood, Mill Park, and Parkrose Heights neighborhoods. Building types are primarily commercial at the heart of the area, with low-density single-family residential housing, particularly in the eastern portion of the district. Significant property owners include Adventist Medical Center, the Oregon Clinic, PacTrust, and Mall 205.

Designated as a Regional Center by Metro, Gateway seeks to become a jobs-rich community that is safe, affordable and accessible through transit, active transportation and auto traffic. Additional goals include maintaining existing housing stock, improving street connectivity, adding more parks and open space, and protecting existing tree canopy. Economic development that brings family-wage jobs to Gateway is critical to achieving the vital, healthy and whole community that Gateway seeks to become.

Key Activities

GOVERNANCE

The Gateway Ecodistrict engagement process was catalyzed by a student project. A group of graduate students in PSU's Masters in Urban and Regional Planning program led a six-month engagement process around the EcoDistricts Framework goals, resulting in a working group.

The area already had an active group of stakeholders, with long-standing and strong relationships with the City, along with credibility and respect for being effective community leaders. This group embarked on a phased approach to engagement where a steering committee was recruited between October 2010 and March 2011. The committee was facilitated by PoSI and made up of businesses, medical institutions, property owners, residents, and other key stakeholders. Community meetings were held to solicit input for visioning.

The second phase, which occurred from March to June 2011, was the identification of priorities. As a result of this phase the steering committee created a communications platform, began the assessment process, and then formally signed an MOU between steering committee members.

In January 2012, the third phase was initiated to create a formal structure. The steering committee, formed in 2010, transition to a Board of Directors to enable a flexible and adaptable governing body with board members appointed for two-year terms. Monthly meetings were held open to the public. An advisory group was also formed, which met quarterly. Meetings focused on specific projects or interests. The advisory committee allowed for engagement in the project while offering a position that required a lower time commitment than the board.

ASSESSMENT

Like Foster Green, a consultant team was hired by the Portland Development Commission to facilitate an assessment process for the Gateway Ecodistrict. The team was made up of staff from SERA Architects, Brightworks, and Puttman Infrastructure. A formal assessment was completed between May and July 2011. Project priorities were identified through a variety of means including, but not limited to, gathering a baseline and setting targets, matching neighborhood character with opportunities, and comparing potential strategies with the EcoDistricts Framework and goals. This process also included comparing the EcoDistricts Framework priorities with Portland Development Commission and Bureau of Planning priorities to see if any funding or city staff capacity could be leveraged.

At the end of this process, one major project stood out as high priority: an energy retrofit program that was later branded ReEnergize Gateway. Five additional projects were identified as priorities from the long list developed in the assessment phase. These five are listed below:

1. Advocacy and support for TIF investment in Gateway Education Center
2. Bike and pedestrian infrastructure around transit center
3. Retrofit street lighting to LEDs and street lighting to improve safety and performance
4. Medical waste management
5. Materials collection program

Project Development: Projects Catalyzed by the Pilot Process

COMMUNITY ACTION

ReEnergize Gateway

Reenergize Gateway is an energy retrofit and renewable energy program that aims to deliver a neighborhood-based energy program in which 50% of building owners contacted take some type of action to improve their energy performance. The strategies of this program would include behavior changes, weatherization, and full building retrofits. In 2012, the Portland Development Commission contracted PoSI to assess the feasibility of the project team's proposal and create a plan for implementation.

Gateway Placemaking and Connectivity Enhancements

Through a business development plan, PoSI explored the concept and feasibility of near-term capital improvement projects that could be done for under $30,000. The plan highlighted crowdfunding as a strategy for raising funds to complete the project. The goal of the project was to create a sense of place at the Gateway Transit Center and to use wayfinding to help guide users and tourists. Another goal was to increase the connectivity for pedestrian and cyclists. PoSI recommended a four-phase approach:

Phase 1: Transit station signage and wayfinding artwork

Phase 2: Multnomah Street turnaround and pedestrian/bike improvements

Phase 3: Enhanced pedestrian connections to surrounding areas

Phase 4: Multnomah Street extension and Pacific Street enhancements

Specific strategies, costs and partners were identified for each phase and crowdfunding was explored deeply as a means for funding the initiatives.

Project Development: Projects Initiated by Other Stakeholders

BUILDINGS

Glisan Commons

This joint mixed-use project is a co-development between REACH, an affordable housing developer, and Human Solutions, a health and social service provider that provides opportunities out of poverty for homeless and low-income populations.[xxx] The project features five stories and 67 units of affordable housing, as well as 16,000 square feet of ground floor commercial space. Ride Connection, a nonprofit organization that provides transportation options for seniors and people with disabilities, operates the commercial space.[xxxi]

Russellville Park West

Russellville Park West is a 140-unit senior independent and assisted-living facility in the Gateway neighborhood. It is conveniently located right on the MAX light rail line. Key Bank provided financing, with the assistance of a grant from Metro and tax abatements granted by the city.[xxxii]

INFRASTRUCTURE

TriMet MAX Green Line and new station at Main Street

The I-205/Portland Mall Light Rail Project expanded TriMet's light rail system (MAX) into southeast Portland and northern Clackamas County. The new line will extended the light rail 8.3 miles along I-205 to Clackamas Town Center and on the Portland Transit Mall between Union Station and Portland State University. Eight new stations were built along the 6.5-mile portion paralleling I-205. The SE Main Street station is a catalyst project for new development in the Gateway area.[xxxiii]

Glisan Commons

102nd Avenue Streetscape Improvement Project, Phase II

In Phase Two of this streetscape improvement project, sidewalks were widened, and ornamental streetlights were installed with vertical banners welcoming people to the Gateway neighborhood. The Portland Bureau of Transportation applied for a federal grant to fund the project. A major cost was the purchase of between four and six feet of private right of way to widen the sidewalk. The Portland Development Commission provided 10 percent of the total cost in matching funds — approximately $140,000 for Phase II. Phase I of the project started in the winter of 2008 and was completed in November of that year. The cost was just under $5 million, coming from a federal transportation grant and matching funds from PDC.[xxxiv]

Gateway Green Street

This pilot project was a partnership between Portland Development Commission and property owners, Portland Bureau of Environmental Services (BES), Portland Bureau of Transportation (PBOT), and Oregon Department of Transportation. The Green Street, which is a 660-foot section of NE 97th Avenue, was chosen because of its potential to catalyze redevelopment and implement a local street network. The total cost of the project is estimated at $1.5 million. Features included new sidewalks, on-site stormwater management, and improvements to the multi-use path. Construction began at the end of July 2011 with primary work complete November 2011. BES planted the bioswales in spring 2012.

Gateway Park & Urban Plaza

In 2008, the PDC and Portland Parks and Recreation (PPR) purchased three adjacent properties that combined total 4.2 acres. PDC and PPR currently share joint title for the parcels. Through a community engagement process and previous planning initiatives, it was determined that the now-vacant site should become a three-acre neighborhood park with one-acre of complementary mixed-use development led by PDC. The Gateway Neighborhood Park project will help promote a strong sense of community identity and brand Gateway as a family friendly, multi-generational, and multi-cultural neighborhood. This project will break ground in 2016. A commercial development was approved to compliment the park uses.

COMMUNITY ACTION

Gateway Green

In 2005, Gateway residents began meeting and organizing around a specific neighborhood challenge: a lack of green space. In 2007, a public process began and the Gateway Green Vision Plan was drafted in 2008 for a 40-acre destination park between two freeways. Governor Kulongoski's office gave Gateway Green designation as an Oregon Solutions project, giving it access to resources for stakeholder facilitation. A Declaration of Cooperation was signed between over 20 stakeholders. A Memorandum of Understanding was also signed between Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) and Portland Parks and Recreation that stated ODOT's intention to transfer ownership of over 25 acres of the proposed site to Portland Parks and Recreation.

In 2013, the Gateway Green team launched a crowdfunding initiative, leveraging community interest to help fund the park. They exceeded their goal of $100,000 and raised $123,880 for the new park. Additional fundraising is underway to accelerate the development of this new urban park.

Current Status

The Board of Directors is not currently active, but still has an office donated by Fred Meyer. There is interest from several board members to revive the board.

The board started with a branding campaign and came up with “Growing Gateway” as a value that embodied the Gateway Ecodistrict project. The group led a few community events celebrating bike infrastructure and diverse neighborhood cultures, but their biggest project priority, a low-income residential weatherization program, never got off the ground despite significant community support and a small grant from the East Portland Action Plan. The weatherization program bundled a suite of existing energy efficiency programs delivered by the community. Other priorities included a range of streetscape and pedestrian improvements, some of which are underway with strong leadership from the city. The iconic Gateway Green project was underway before the Ecodistrict pilot and has continued successfully with many of the same partners. Many point to the park as the kind of community-driven project that should come out of an EcoDistricts approach.

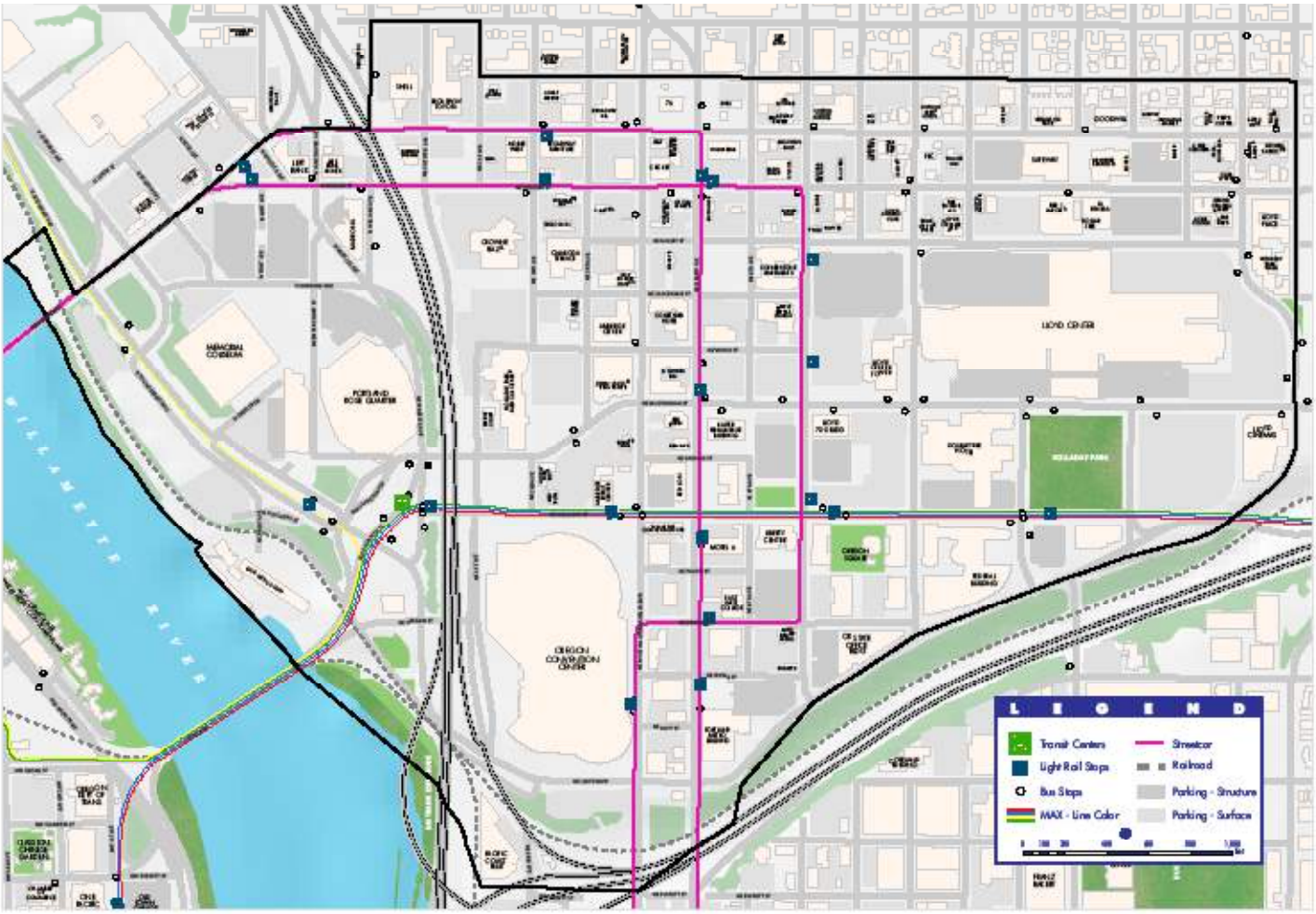
Lessons Learned

CHALLENGES OF PREVIOUS FAILED PLANNING EFFORTS

The Gateway Ecodistrict project experienced many similar challenges to the Foster Green area. The area has had the benefit and the challenge of many different city plans and initiatives. These past unfulfilled promises and incomplete redevelopment efforts created a context of fatigue and mistrust within the community. An outreach effort and early wins from implementing priorities would have deepened the credibility of the pilot project and potentially increased momentum.

With this in mind, EcoDistricts plans to accelerate the assessment phase in future projects to keep momentum strong. In addition, prioritizing a few “quick win” projects that community members explicitly want may help to ensure that the community stays positive and invested.

LLOYD


LEGEND
Transit Centers
Light Rail Stops
Bus Stops
MAX - Line Color
Streetcar
Railroad
Parking - Structure
Parking - Surface
LLOYD CENTER
OREGON CONVENTION CENTER
WILLAMETTE RIVER

At a Glance

TOTAL AREA	368 ACRES
TOTAL POPULATION	1,369 RESIDENTS
MEDIAN AGE	44.3
TOTAL EMPLOYEES	16,424
PER CAPITA INCOME	$35,282
TOTAL AREA OF BUILDINGS	4,349,195 SF
% RESIDENTIAL	5%
% COMMERCIAL	61%
% INSTITUTIONAL	16%
# LEED CERTIFIED BUILDINGS	3

Project Summary

The Lloyd Ecodistrict is located just east of Portland's central business district across the Willamette River. The area includes over 300 acres and more than 16,000 employees, most of whom live outside the district. The district consists primarily of commercial and institutional buildings (including the Oregon Convention Center, Lloyd Center, and the Rose Quarter Arena) with the majority of people traveling to the district for shopping, conferences, sporting, and other entertainment events. Residential land use is limited (the district averages one person per acre). There are a number of vacant parcels and surface parking lots throughout the district. While the district is well served by public transit, highways, and major roads act as a major boundary between the Lloyd District and surrounding neighborhoods.

Key Activities

GOVERNANCE

The Lloyd Ecodistrict was the only pilot project that began its processes and development before the formal PoSI pilot began. It was initiated by an assessment process completed by Oregon Solutions, a State of Oregon funded organization associated with the National Policy Consensus Center at Portland State University. The assessment explored the potential of a Lloyd Crossing "Green District". With support from Governor Kulongoski and Mayor Sam Adams, PoSI invited the Lloyd District into the Ecodistrict pilot program.

Before the Lloyd District joined the pilot, it was necessary for stakeholders to define their individual commitments and expectations. Oregon Solutions was hired to facilitate the process and work with stakeholders to draft and then sign a Declaration of Cooperation to solidify these commitments in contract form.

During this process, many of the area's key property owners and employers came together to form a working group. The working group included the Lloyd Center Mall, Oregon Convention Center, the Liberty Center, Bonneville Power, the State of Oregon, and Rose Garden Arena as well as public sector partners. Together, a vision statement was crafted.

VISION STATEMENT

"The Lloyd EcoDistrict aspires to be the most sustainable business district in North America."

Stakeholders met regularly to develop and prioritize sustainability goals, objectives and metrics, choose "showcase" projects, and develop principles of district management and investment. The purpose of the Declaration of Cooperation was to fund and organize around a three-year formation phase that included hiring a Sustainability Director, completing a performance baseline and implementing prioritized strategies.

Oregon Solutions led the effort to identify funding options for the district, and determined that the best organization to administer funds was the Lloyd Business Improvement District, which was established in 2002. In 2011, the working group hired a Sustainability Director.

The Lloyd Ecodistrict set itself apart from the other pilots by securing staff capacity and utilizing an existing governance structure – the Lloyd Transportation Demand Management Association (Lloyd TMA). The Lloyd TMA was founded in 1994 and very successfully formed public and private partnerships that allowed the area's large employers, developers, building owners, and city leadership to work together towards local transportation and economic development solutions.

ASSESSMENT

During the formation phase of the Lloyd EcoDdstrict, several showcase projects were identified to initiate a broader district-scale sustainability strategy.

1. District-Wide Green Streets Strategy
2. Food Waste Compost Program
3. Existing Building Retrofit
4. Improve District Transportation Mode Split
5. Sustainable District Brand

In October 2012, PoSI led work to complete an in-depth assessment and Ecodistrict Roadmap with a team made up of Puttman Infrastructure, Arup, and Zero Waste Alliance. As an underdeveloped business district, the value proposition for becoming an Ecodistrict was a key area of focus. The assessment illuminated the core benefits that would be gained by the business district, including a sense of place, a green brand, cost savings, new investments from private capital, new partnerships, and a network of support. Communicating the results of the assessment and anticipated benefits to business owners was critical for gaining buy-in.

The recommendations contain a set of high-impact strategies that are broken down into three categories: building, infrastructure, and community-led actions and programs. One of the outcomes of the assessment phase was a matrix of recommended strategies that align with and are prioritized through the lens of four overarching goals:

- Efficient (energy, water, and waste efficiency)
- Biophilic (connection to nature)
- Connected (multi-modal access)
- Prosperous (economic return and job growth)

A Solar Site Analysis was done and determined that the district has 17,737,603 square feet of usable solar rooftop area. Compass Resource Management was brought in to assess the business case potential of a district utility and district water system. District heat was determined to be an advantageous investment.

Project Development: Projects Catalyzed by the Pilot Process

BUILDINGS

Rose Quarter District Energy System Feasibility Study

After studying the energy performance of the Rose Garden, the Oregon Convention Center and Veterans Memorial Coliseum, British Columbia-based Corix concluded that a shared thermal energy system between the facilities would be technically feasible.[xxxv] However, the financial feasibility and cost-benefit analysis projected lower returns then required by a private utility to secure investment in the project at that time.

INFRASTRUCTURE

LED Parking Lighting

The Lloyd Ecodistrict launched an LED parking lighting group purchasing project which places Lloyd Ecodistrict as the procurer of goods and services on behalf of the district at a deep discount to them, and with a small fee based income stream for the organization.

COMMUNITY ACTION

Energy Efficiency Programs

Energy efficiency and waste reduction were identified as key priority areas by the board. An Energy Efficiency Action Plan was drafted and from it, the Lloyd Ecodistrict identified 15 actions geared toward achieving their energy reduction goals. Key among them was creating an ongoing stakeholder energy efficiency working group called the LE3, who vet energy efficiency efforts for the district, continue to support district wide pprojects and initiatives, and who draft policy for the district to consider.

In 2013, the Lloyd Ecodistrict hired a business efficiency program manager to lead the engagement with business owners at three different scales, including large energy users, sectors of influence in the district, and small main street businesses. Large business owners were recruited to participate in the Kilowatt Crackdown sponsored by BOMA Oregon, City of Portland Bureau of Planning and Sustainability, and Northwest Energy Efficiency Alliance. Fourteen buildings in the district enrolled in 2013 and agreed to track their energy usage over a 12-month period and compare to baseline assessments. The Lloyd Ecodistrict worked with participants to promote the benefits of the Kilowatt Crackdown and assisted participants in confirming eligibility for Energy Star certification.

In addition, large commercial property owners and managers in the district were recruited to use a free online tool, Energy Star Portfolio Manager, making it possible to track energy usage in the district. Eighteen properties are a part of the program and have committed to track and share their energy usage for three years.

Lloyd Ecodistrict also engaged smaller businesses by partnering with the City of Portland's Sustainability at Work program, which provides a high level review of energy and water usage, compost procedures, and waste removal practices. In addition, Pacific Power provides commercial energy assessments and recommendations for energy savings. Forty-six businesses were contacted by the program between October 2012 and April 2013. This work is still underway.

Project Development: Projects Initiated by Other Stakeholders

BUILDINGS

Hassalo on Eighth

Hassalo on Eighth is a major catalytic building project that will double the amount of residential housing in the District and add to the vibrancy and activity in the area. The project consists of three new buildings of varying densities, landscaped private drives, and an outdoor plaza. The developer, American Assets Trust, is transforming the experience and perception of this underdeveloped district in the heart of Portland. The project includes over one million square feet of new construction; over 600 apartment units; 44,000 square feet of retail; and 1,200 below-grade parking stalls. Over $162 million was spent on the project. It is slated for completion in September 2015.

The development team is pursuing USGBC LEED Platinum certification for all three buildings, and a LEED-ND Platinum for multi-block project. Site-specific strategies include rainwater harvesting and treatment, on-site wastewater treatment and re-use through infiltration, district energy, natural daylighting, access to public transportation, and more.

Moda Center and Veterans Coliseum Retrofit

In January 2010, the Trail Blazers' Moda Center Arena became the first professional sports arena in the world to achieve LEED Gold certification under the U.S. Green Building Council's Existing Buildings standard, making the team national leaders in green building design. Since 2009, 1.1 million has been spent on sustainability improvements including energy efficient lighting projects, new HVAC system installations, new hot water heater equipment, and chemical-free water treatment on cooling towers.

Hassalo on Eighth

Oregon Convention Center

The meeting and convention center has achieved the U.S. Green Building Council's LEED Platinum rating, among the highest green rating awards. The center previously held a LEED Silver rating. Metro, owner and operator of the 1-plus million-square-foot event center, invested approximately $75,000 in upgrades in 2013 to qualify at the higher level. Upgrades included plumbing retrofits to reduce water use and upgraded lighting and mechanical systems.[xxxvi] The building opened in 1990, expanded in 2003, earned LEED Certified designation in 2004, and upgraded to LEED Silver four years later.

Lloyd Center Mall Retrofit and Expansion

The Lloyd Center Mall was the largest mall in the country when it opened its doors in 1960. Since then, it has seen many changes due to the economy, like many of the shopping malls in the U.S. It was purchased in 2013 by Cypress Equities Real Estate Investment Management and several significant sustainability improvements are underway. A partnership was been formed between Lloyd Center, the Oregon Department of Energy (ODOE), and the Energy Trust of Oregon to achieve deeper reductions in energy use. In addition to lighting improvements, its heating and cooling systems will be upgraded, resulting in a 25% to 30% reduction in energy use. The renovations will include more exterior storefronts, pedestrian entrances, and converting part of the parking garage into a grand entrance. These changes will help to update the mall to fit the changes happening in Lloyd District, and add to the growing vibrancy, walkability, and bikeability of the area. The total cost of the renovations is estimated to be $50 million.[xxxvii]

INFRASTRUCTURE

Bicycle Improvements and Road Diet — Multnomah Boulevard

In 2012, Multnomah Boulevard went through a transformation from five lanes to three with on-street parking, planters, and separated bike lanes. The bike lanes were funded by the Green Lane Project. To compliment this project, the City of Portland completed a 1.22 mile protected bike lane on NE Multnomah Street. The protected bike lane is one-way on each side of the road and is separated by flexible delineators, planters, a painted buffer, and green stripes painted at intersections.

One year after the NE Multnomah demonstration project was completed, bicycle commuting increased over 25% in the Lloyd District. Bike ridership on the new protected bike lanes jumped 15% in the first year, and other nearby projects like the Lloyd Mall redesign have contributed to improved livability.[xxxviii]

East Side Street Car Loop

Based on the success of the Portland Streetcar in other parts of the city, the City of Portland added an extension called the Portland East Side Loop. The East Side Loop was approved for project development through the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) and the city received $75 million from the FTA in April, 2009. Construction of the line began in 2009, and opened September 2012. Overall, the project cost was $148 million.[xxxix]

Current Status

The Lloyd Ecodistrict board is active and thriving. It was integrated into the Business Improvement District, providing stable and long-term funding. Two full-time staff coordinate progress and deliver district programs. Major priorities include existing building retrofits, aggregate renewable energy program, district-scale energy and water utilities, energy efficient streetlights, and green infrastructure corridors. A small business energy efficiency program was delivered to businesses along the Broadway Weidler couplet. A lighting retrofit is underway in parking structures across the district as well. The fortuitous timing of Hassalo on Eighth provided a catalyst for many other infrastructure and green building priorities for the district.

Lessons Learned

LEVERAGING RESOURCES

The Lloyd Ecodistrict is an excellent example of effective stakeholder relations and governance, and successful project implementation at a district-scale. By combining their resources and leveraging existing and incoming projects, both private and public partners were able to work together to achieve measurable outcomes. The Lloyd Business Improvement District, now the Lloyd Enhanced Services District, as well as the Lloyd Transportation Management Association provided a sturdy foundation for the Ecodistrict to build from.

GOVERNANCE

Much of the success of this initiative is attributed to the previous work of the Lloyd TMA, proving that building off of an existing organizational structure, relationships, trust, and capacity can lead to advanced outcomes when compared to establishing an new organization. The existence of the local business improvement district was critical with regard to legality and funding of Ecodistrict projects.

CAPACITY

Success was linked to the Lloyd Ecodistrict's early decision to create a new nonprofit, as well as to use funds towards a full-time executive director. The executive director facilitated the work of the board, managed the steering committee, strengthened and built new relationships with business owners, and has been invaluable to the ability of the district to achieve desired outcomes.

KEY FINDINGS

Informing the EcoDistricts Protocol and Target Cities

In 2014, EcoDistricts expanded its organizational capacity and programming with the launch of Target Cities, an eight city, ten-project pilot program to advance district-scale sustainable development across North America. EcoDistricts has also commenced a major investment in updating the EcoDistricts Framework (now the EcoDistricts Protocol), originally published in 2010 as a blueprint to accelerating investment in integrated district-scale development.

Since 2012, the Framework has informed over 30 urban regeneration projects across North America, and has been at the center of the organization's convening and training efforts, which have been introduced to over 3,000 urban leaders. The EcoDistricts Framework and pilot programs continue to be at the core of EcoDistricts' efforts in transforming the marketplace.

This timely evaluation of the Portland pilot program has become a critical step in guiding the next chapter in EcoDistricts programmatic work to accelerate district-scale sustainable development. A summary of findings from this evaluation is provided below.

ADVANCING COMPREHENSIVE URBAN REGENERATION IS CHALLENGING

The Portland pilot and EcoDistricts Framework was designed to advance net generation urban regeneration best practices. Its emphasis on robust governance structures, comprehensive sustainability metrics, and transparent reporting went beyond business as usual practices within community development and urban planning. Systematically applying the Framework's four-step methodology was difficult given the diversity of stakeholders and their preexisting relationships. Additionally, as the report calls out, many projects fell outside the scope of the pilot, creating a fragmented environment.

The evolution of the EcoDistrict Framework into the Protocol will reflect the challenges inherent in the scope of the four-phase process. Establishing district governance and performing an integrated neighborhood assessment can be costly in effort, time, and expense. However, in the past few years since the Portland pilot program feedback from Incubator participants, advisory committee members, municipal leaders and developers, and Target Cities pilot projects have indicated that while these issues are challenging, they are fundamental to success.

URBAN REGENERATION REQUIRES INNOVATIVE CROSS-SECTOR LEADERSHIP

The Portland pilot program highlighted the importance of cross-sector leadership. When reviewing the key lessons across the projects, it was evident that the most successful pilots and projects embraced a shared leadership model across public, private, and community-based sectors. While at times one sector may have led an initiative or effort, success was more fully realized where multiple sectors collaborated on solutions, as was the case in the Lloyd Ecodistrict, where Oregon Solutions facilitated a multi stakeholder process to shape a collaborative governance structure. The EcoDistricts Protocol clearly identifies a critical 'triad' of stakeholder groups – public, private and civic – needed at the table.

GOVERNANCE MATTERS

Portland has a rich history of innovation, and in many project examples, strong governing partnerships proved to be an important ingredient of success, from the Portland Streetcar to the Lloyd pilot. The collaborative governance process facilitated by Oregon Solutions in Lloyd stands out as an exemplar approach to designing a collaborative governance model to advance public and private sector driven projects.

Since commencing this evaluation, EcoDistricts has explored collaborative governance theory and frameworks in detail and convened an industry roundtable of leading thinkers, researchers, and practitioners to help shape governance requirements within the Protocol. Now with a formal partnership with Oregon Solutions, and on the back of the Lloyd Ecodistrict pilot, EcoDistricts is developing a practitioner's toolkit for collaborative governance in district- and neighborhood-scale development.

CLEAR GUIDANCE FOR COMPLETING "ECODISTRICT ROADMAPS" IS NEEDED

At the start of the pilot, PoSI didn't provide a set of guidelines for developing a district assessment plan or roadmap for the pilot projects. Instead, PoSI relied on best industry practice and research into existing methods to guide the pilot projects. As a consequence, there was great variety in each of the assessments and roadmaps created.

As a result of the Portland pilot, EcoDistricts commissioned the forthcoming District Assessment practitioner's toolkit. This evaluation has confirmed that the level of detail invested in a district assessment needs to be within context to the community and the nature of the opportunities. For example, a community-led neighborhood renewal effort focusing on a few core projects would require a different level of assessment when compared to a large commercial and retail district undergoing significant infrastructure and building investment. Understanding the necessary district assessment steps for different neighborhood types is fundamental to creating an EcoDistricts Roadmap that is relevant and feasible.

PERFORMANCE METRICS NEED TO BALANCE RIGOR AND FLEXIBILITY

Feedback from the pilot project teams suggested the eight EcoDistricts Performance Areas were particularly difficult to address. There is little precedent in urban redevelopment projects, especially in those that involve multiple stakeholders, to address or meet performance metrics or targets. Interviewees suggested that metrics for each performance area should be defined by local stakeholder groups and/or be based on specific project needs, and that intensive baseline data collection was a low priority. While people agreed that upstream metrics and targets are important to driving innovation and measuring impact, many wanted greater flexibility in terms of how they address or meet the intent of the performance areas. Additionally, data can be costly and difficult to obtain, especially if ongoing reporting is required. Given the need to understand the impact of project investments, it is clearly a rich area to explore with cities and big data providers (e.g. utilities, cities, Google) and will be a key item of discovery with the Target Cities pilot projects over the next 12-18 months. We continue to be convinced that without metrics to guide investments, we'll struggle to meet many of the key challenges like climate change, environmental pollution, and the diminishing health of our citizens over time.

RIGOROUS AND REGULAR REPORTING IS IMPORTANT

While stakeholders generally agreed that the idea of regular and transparent reporting of progress is critical to advancing projects and building trust, the Portland pilots focused primarily on governance, assessment, and project development. Without clarity regarding monitoring, verification and reporting, the pilot suffered, as having clarity and guidance in this area would have provided important signals regarding the nature of governance and importance of metrics over time. The role of ongoing monitoring and reporting of district performance has become an important component of the Protocol and Target Cities program. Who and how stakeholders report and for what purposes are key questions to be explored.

TIME IS NEEDED FOR NEIGHBORHOOD FORMATION

The evaluation process revealed many insights around Step 1 of the EcoDistricts methodology – District Organization. We learned, first, that cultivating authentic engagement takes time. This is especially true for projects in residentially-dominant areas, or projects with many community stakeholders, where it could take several years to earn trust and build the relationships that are necessary to genuinely engage the community. In conducting outreach and building a team of stakeholders, the purpose and value of the EcoDistricts approach needs to be clearly communicated in distinct and personal ways that resonate with the existing values of stakeholder groups. Despite the challenge of time, lack of effective organization can be detrimental to project outcomes later on.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH IS CRITICAL

Several factors were identified as key to community outreach. The first is accessible language and messaging. Information materials should be easy to understand and be inclusive to a range of stakeholders including institutions, city partners, and community residents. It is also important that decision-makers be effective listeners. This is particularly so for projects in areas where there may be an element of planning fatigue or a history of disinvestment. Communities often have a clear sense of what they want or need to do, based on their internal assets or challenges, so being able to listen effectively and hear the community's vision is very important. Similarly, in areas with limited capacity, there may not be a community leader or champion. If this is the case, capacity building should be a key component of Step 1. This could include training programs, personal relationship building, or incentives like paying people for their time rather than depending on volunteer time.

EARLY PROJECT WINS BUILD MOMENTUM

The value of early win projects, which balance the needs of investing in longer-term capital-intensive projects, was often cited as a critical success factor. Quicker, cheaper, and lighter strategies can be a valuable way to get community members excited about the development process and build support and investment. Projects like Lloyd's Multnomah Street "Road Diet" and SoMa's Halprin improvements were called out as projects that fit such criteria.

As a result of this feedback, short-term wins is something the Protocol will encourage and reward. This could be something as simple as tactical urbanism type projects or a community event. Interviewees in this evaluation suggested focusing on low hanging fruit and projects that are visible to build morale. These early projects can provide something tangible to engage and build involvement with community members or stakeholders. This has now become a critical objective of the Target Cities program.

THE PROTOCOL SHOULD INFORM HOW URBAN RENEWAL DISTRICTS ARE MANAGED

Urban Renewal Areas are an important tool used around the world to advance urban regeneration. The Protocol could be a powerful tool to be used by public development agencies such as the Portland Development Commission to advance district projects. Encouraging new models of robust local governance, the application of rigorous performance metrics, the development of comprehensive roadmaps (that link typically disparate planning and assessment efforts), and transparent and rigorous reporting could spark innovation across the industry and help to advance a wide range of public policies that are currently gaining traction (e.g. green infrastructure, public health, etc.). Interviewees that contributed to this evaluation confirmed the importance of the Framework in helping to integrate efforts across city agencies, and that it maintained a spotlight on the need for a holistic approach to development planning and project delivery.

APPENDIX

Interviewees

Alisa Kane, Green Building Manager, City of Portland

Michael Armstrong, Senior Sustainability Manager, City of Portland

Vinh Mason, Green Building Policy Coordinator, City of Portland

Lisa Abuaf, Central City Manager, Portland Development Commission

Irene Bowers, Senior Project Manager, Portland Development Commission

Lew Bowers, Former Central City Manager, Portland Development Commission

Matthew Arnold, Associate Prinicipal, SERA Architects

Jonathan Brandt, Steering Committee Chair, Foster-Green EcoDistricts

Jalene Littlejohn, Committee Co-Chair, Green Lents

Linda Robinson, Committee Chair, Gateway Green

Ted Gilbert, Developer

Rick Williams, Executive Director, GO Lloyd TMA

Pete Collins, Executive Director, South Waterfront Community Relations

Bob Naito, CEO, Naito Development

Erin Flynn, Associate Vice President, Strategic Partnerships, Portland State University

Liz Hormann, SoMa EcoDistrict Coordinator, Portland State University

Jennifer Allen, Director, Institute of Sustainable Solutions, Portland State University

Interview Questions

FOR PILOT DISTRICTS

Engagement/Governance:

- What's the current state of the steering committee/board and how do you define membership?
- How has the EcoDistrict leadership changed in the last few years?
- What were the challenges in establishing an organized leadership group?
- What worked well?

Assessment/Strategy

- How involved were you in the assessment part of this pilot?
- How did the assessment define the needs of the EcoDistrict and identify priority projects?
- What were some challenges with the assessment portion of the project?
- What went well?

Projects

- What projects occurred as a result of the EcoDistrict?
- What projects were planned that weren't able to get off the ground?
- What projects are still in development?
- What were barriers to getting projects done?
- What worked well?
- Where did project funding come from?

Management

- What indicators are being tracked, either quantitative or qualitative?

General

- What are your next steps as an EcoDistrict?
- What advice would you give to another neighborhood interested in becoming an EcoDistrict?
- What advice would you give to another city interested in supporting EcoDistrict development?
- Any other thoughts or reflections on the EcoDistrict experience that we haven't yet addressed?

FOR CITY STAFF

Engagement/Governance:

- How would you characterize the current state of each EcoDistrict's steering committee/board?
- What were the challenges in establishing governance?
- What worked well?

Assessment/Strategy:

- How did the assessment define the needs of the EcoDistrict and identify priority projects?
- Was it successful/important to defining priorities for the district stakeholders?
- Did the assessment help lay the ground work for choosing priorities?
- What were some challenges with the assessment portion of the project?
- What went well?

Projects:

- What projects occurred as a result of the EcoDistrict?
- What projects were planned that weren't able to get off the ground?
- What projects are still in development?
- How essential was the EcoDistrict framework to prioritizing high impact projects?
- What were barriers to getting projects done?
- What worked well?

Management:

- What is the city's current relationship with each district?
- What do you expect the relationship to look like in the future (5-10 years out?)
- Has the EcoDistrict process changed the way or types of data collected by the city?

General

- What are the City's next steps around EcoDistricts?
- What advice would you give to another city interested in supporting EcoDistrict development?
- Any other thoughts or reflections on the EcoDistrict experience that we haven't yet addressed?

Footnotes

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