

Coalition for a Livable Future
Regional Livability Summit
March 7 & 8, 2003
Proceedings

OVERVIEW

The Coalition for a Livable Future held its first ever Regional Livability Summit on March 7th and 8th, 2003, focusing on the topic of equity. The summit consisted of a Saturday evening public forum and an all-day Saturday summit.

PARTICIPANTS

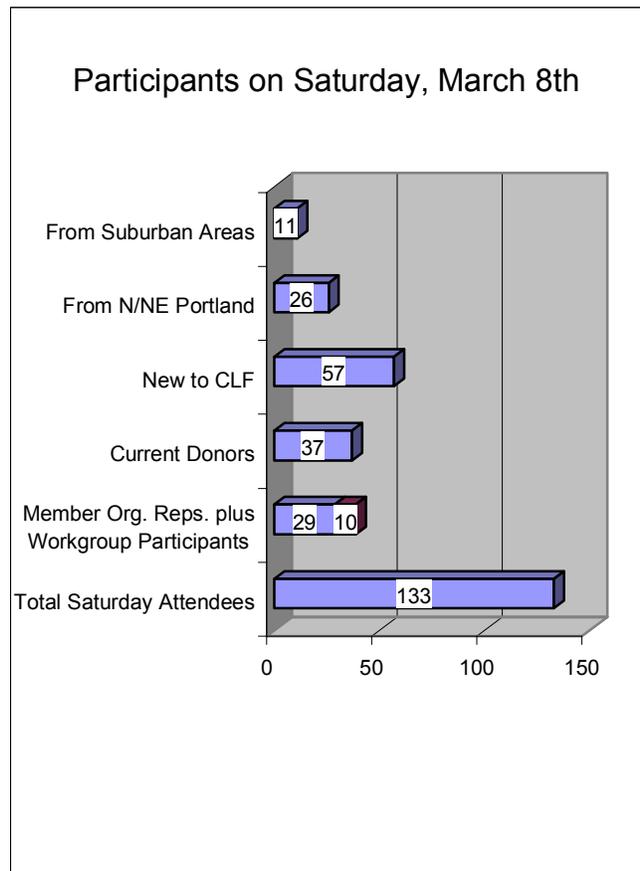
Friday, March 7: approx. 175 participants

Saturday, March 8: 133 participants.

29 people represented member organizations, and an additional 10 individuals have been involved in CLF working groups. 57 people were new to CLF. 37 people were CLF donors. 26 people were from N/NE Portland. 11 people were from suburban areas, including Milwaukie, Beaverton, Lake Oswego, Vancouver, Oregon City, Hillsboro, and unincorporated Washington County.

Member organizations represented:

- AIA
- AORTA
- Audubon Society of Portland
- Cascadia Behavioral Healthcare
- Citizens for Sensible Transportation
- Clackamas Community Land Trust
- Community Alliance of Tenants
- Community Development Network
- Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon
- Elders in Action
- Friends of Forest Park
- Growing Gardens
- League of Women Voters
- 1000 Friends of Oregon
- Portland Community Land Trust
- Portland Housing Center
- REACH CDC
- Sierra Club
- Southeast Uplift
- Tualatin Valley Housing Partners
- Willamette Pedestrian Coalition
- Woodlawn Neighborhood Association



MARCH 7 PUBLIC FORUM

Our keynote speaker, **Angela Glover Blackwell** of PolicyLink spoke at a Friday evening public forum at PSU. Her comments were followed by a response panel moderated by **Tasha Harmon** that included:

- Congressman **Earl Blumenauer**, Third District
- **David Bragdon**, Metro President
- **Gale Castillo**, Executive Director, Hispanic Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce
- **Linda Netherton**, Director of Housing Development Corporation of Hillsboro
- **Bruce Watts**, Director of TriMet Diversity and Transit Equity Division

A transcript and tape recording of the forum is available. Here are some of the points Angela made:

People look to Portland as a model for smart growth. If Portland can make equity central to smart growth, it would make a huge difference for the nation.

Several trends are leading us to tomorrow.

- Changing demographics.
- We are now a nation of regions, because it is regions that now interact with the global economy.
- The digital economy and the wealth gap.
- Democracy is in crisis. We have to figure out ways to get people involved in their communities, involved in decisions that impact their lives.

The Three E's people talk about in the smart growth movement are the environment, the economy, and equity. But Equity constantly falls off the table, for several reasons. One, because the people who have an interest in making sure that it stays on the table because their lives tomorrow depend on it are often not in the room. Two, we are uncomfortable talking about issues that move us into the race discussion. And lastly, because we really haven't built the examples to allow us to know what strategies we need to be proponents for.

We need to be advocates for and pursue strategies that do four things:

- 1) Integrate the people strategies with the place strategies.
- 2) Harness market forces to produce a double bottom line. We want economic return for investors, and economic and social returns for the people who live in communities.
- 3) Reduce regional disparities. One way to do that is with a regional tax sharing plan.
- 4) Increase participation in planning processes.

We've got to have more than just wonderful strategies, islands of excellence here and there; we need policies. And we've got to be able to develop a new generation of policies that achieve economic and social equity. Housing trust funds, community land trusts, inclusionary zoning, living wage laws. These are strategies and policies that allow us to get on that road that leads to regional equity. I'm excited that you want to have this conversation because I have a feeling that—since people look to you to do smart growth—if you start saying back to them “you can't do smart growth without equity” some people will actually start to listen.

MARCH 8 SUMMIT PROCEEDINGS

State of the Region presentation by Ethan Seltzer

Ethan's powerpoint presentation on trends in our region is available.

Morning session: Issue areas identify priorities and relations to equity

Participants chose discussion groups around six themes: natural resources, affordable housing, transportation, community food systems, land use and design, and other topics. Each group identified priority issues of importance in the coming year. These priorities were shared in a panel format, moderated by Angela Glover Blackwell and Kalima Rose of PolicyLink. Panelists included:

Natural Resources: Jim Labbe, Audubon Society of Portland

Affordable Housing: Sam Chase, Community Development Network

Transportation: Ross Williams, Citizens for Sensible Transportation

Community Food Systems: Deb Lippoldt, Growing Gardens

Land Use and Design: Mary Kyle McCurdy, 1000 Friends of Oregon

Other Topics: Jo Ann Bowman, CLF Board Member

Top Priorities by Issue Area

Transportation

1. Transportation system finance reform
2. Creation of intermodal policies
3. Strengthen relationship between development of land use policy and transportation policy, and their implementation

Food Systems

1. Promote a grass-roots movement for change in our food system.
2. Fund the food policy council and regional efforts that ensure public process.
3. Create a public process/dialogue to address hunger and fund/create solutions.

Other

1. Tax Reform: Define what tax equity looks like.
2. Education: The loss of local control has created education funding inequity in the region.
3. Jobs/Job Training: Community awareness of training and economic development issues

Affordable Housing

1. Create a stable, long-term funding source for affordable housing.
2. Education to build awareness, participation, and a sense of political urgency about affordable housing issues.
3. Create and implement existing regulatory policies to achieve affordable housing and equity goals. (e.g. implement regional affordable housing strategy; create incentives for mixed income housing, etc.)
4. Services and employment to prevent and reduce homelessness

Natural Resources

1. Move forward with regional and local natural resource planning:
 - The adoption of a regional program to protect and restore fish and wildlife habitat
 - The implementation of this program at the local level
2. Forge a new public dialogue around property rights, responsibilities, and the public trust by telling people's stories and experiences.
3. Complete the Equity Atlas Project and leverage it to raise awareness about the protection of urban greenspaces, parks, trails, and openspace.

Land Use/Design

1. Connecting people within community
 - Sense of place
 - Community conversations
 - Connect people with regional issues (e.g. UGB)
 - Action: Block by block kit, neighborhood/block empowering sessions
2. Designing as if people mattered: Improve quality of design within the UGB (e.g. mixed use projects, walking scale communities)
3. Use Metro open space to help shape urban land use – land acquisition to shape urban form/community.

Equity Issues

In addition to sharing the priorities identified by their group, panelists also discussed equity issues relating to their topic, and the moderators brought up some common themes.

Natural Resources

- Access to nature, and how language barriers prevent people from accessing information about existing natural areas.
- Washington County is lacking in parks and natural areas, relative to other parts of the region.

Affordable Housing

Affordable housing is closely related to equity, in providing housing choices for all and creating complete communities.

Transportation

- Inability of public transportation to satisfy home to job trips
- Developing transit for Choice riders rather than transit-dependent
- Equity of Transportation Improvements

Community Food Systems

The food priorities are all closely related to equity. In particular, it was emphasized that all people have a stake in the stability of a healthy food system and that it was critical to include all in our community in the steps toward creating a healthy system.

Land Use and Design

The land use and design group ran out of time before they could discuss equity connections.

The panelists discussed public education, and what Angela calls “building the public will.” To build the public will for our priorities, these kinds of discussions must take place at the community level. One barrier to making that happen is language, specifically the jargon that we fall into the habit of using- words like “food system” and “multimodal transportation” do not mean anything to the public until we explain them or change our language. We also exclude people by making unconscious assumptions about who is in the room when we use the word “us” and assume, for example, that we are all middle-class. We should not make such assumptions.

Afternoon session: Making linkages between issues

After lunch, participants broke into discussion groups to identify cross-issue linkages.

Afternoon panelists:

Community Food Systems: Janet Hammer

Transportation: Steve Johnson

Affordable Housing: Holly Iburg

Other: Jo Ann Bowman

Natural Resources: Jim Labbe and Virginia Bruce

Land Use and Design: Lynn Coward, _____, and Meredith Woodsmith

The cross-issue linkages are presented in a matrix format.

Participants Identified linkages with this group in this group

Transportation Affordable Housing Natural Resources Land Use & Design Other

	<p>Improve transportation linkages, including shuttles and pedestrian access, so people can get to culturally appropriate, healthful, affordable, nutritious food sources.</p>	<p>Define affordable housing to include food provisions and nearby access to food. Consider community gardens in all living spaces, but particularly low income apartments. Establish micro-enterprise projects that grow food for a farmers' market within the community.</p>	<p>Cleanup standards for waterways are usually based on contact exposure, not ingestion. Some Native American, Asian, and low-income communities fish for food consumption, which may expose them to high levels of contamination.</p>	<p>Providing spaces to grow food in urban communities. There is a 2-5 year waiting list for community garden space in some underserved communities. Perhaps when public properties (such as school sites) are sold, 10-20% of that land could be preserved for community gardens.</p>	<p>Health, education, economic development</p>
<p>Food</p>				<p>The land use-transportation connection was the most obvious to the group.</p>	<p>Economic development is closely tied to a good transportation policy, particularly in lean economic times. These lean times provide more incentives for us to work together.</p>
<p>Transportation</p>		<p>The transportation system should provide easy access to both jobs and affordable housing.</p>			

Transportation

Participants in this group	Identified linkages with this group	Food	Transportation	Affordable Housing	Natural Resources	Land Use & Design	Other
	<p>Look into providing incentives for developers to provide community gardens.</p>		<p>For low-income families, minimizing transportation costs can free up finances for housing, food, and medical care. If people can't afford to live near their jobs, it taxes the transportation system.</p>			<p>Could use a land value capture tax to fund affordable housing. Design of housing impacts the community. It should be placed near transit centers and other amenities to promote walking and a better environment. Zoning regulations should encourage diverse housing options in all neighborhoods.</p>	<p>Need to get the message out to the public that housing is a necessity, and put a face on the issue so the public can relate to people who need affordable housing. Healthy communities are balanced communities; healthy schools are comprised of all different income levels. Jobs-housing balance. Use a mixture of public and private investment to achieve all these goals.</p>
<i>Affordable Housing</i>							
<i>Natural Resources</i>	<p>Connecting communities to local agriculture also provides a link to open space.</p>	<p>Greenspaces and good design can foster a sense of place in affordable housing.</p>	<p>How do people in southeast Portland get to Forest Park without having cars? Need to provide connectivity for people and wildlife. Collaborate to find funding for such projects.</p>			<p>Use the UGB expansion windfall tax to fund affordable housing and natural resources. Use greenspaces to foster a sense of place.</p>	

Participants in this group	Identified linkages with this group	Transportation	Affordable Housing	Natural Resources	Land Use & Design	Other
Food		You can build greater density around MAX lines. This structure is similar to lines that come in nature, like rivers. Do modeling workshops on design of transportation.	Do modeling workshops on design of affordable housing.	Need to design land use based on the topography and natural resources of the area. Do modeling workshops on public gathering places and parks. Natural resources planning is a good place for a dialog about property rights, responsibilities, public trust.		Tax reform: looking at the value of land and how it is taxed. Need to outreach to business communities and low income communities which normally don't get urban design services. Use schools as public gathering places. Community involvement requires asking "What is important to you?"
Land Use & Design	Create economic development around sustainable food systems. Provide incentive for schools, hospitals, and major employers to get their food from sources that provide local jobs.			Use students as educators of their parents, grandparents, aunts and uncles, as advocates for sustainable community, sustainable environment and social justice related issues.		
Other						

COMMON THEMES THAT EMERGED IN THE SUMMIT

Developing smart growth policies that achieve equity.

Building the public will requires using accessible language.

Building community will require outreach to involve communities in decisions that impact them. Need to build personal relationships. Our region's increasing diversity makes this work more challenging and important. Public spaces can help build community.

Economic development is a link between smart growth and equity. Remember Angela's "double bottom line."

Tax reform and public financing. Find out where public money comes from and where it's going.

NEXT STEPS

1. Summit proceedings and a list of participants will be distributed to all CLF member organizations and summit participants.
2. Each CLF program area should review the summit proceedings and assess how to incorporate ideas generated there into its work. (Current active program areas include affordable housing, transportation, natural resources, and land use.) Program area chairs are encouraged to involve folks who participated in their issue area's breakout sessions at the summit.
3. The member involvement committee will reconvene to review summit evaluations, recruit new committee members, make recommendations about target audience, theme, and goals for next year, and begin planning next year's event.
4. Ideas from the summit proceedings will also be incorporated into the Regional Equity Atlas project.