

Background information for the Balancing Economic Development & Environmental Stewardship Team

We pulled together a bit of information about this topic from other communities for your consideration. This isn't intended to be exhaustive but as a jumping off point for conversation. Below is some information to assist the team:

1. QUESTIONS

2. PORTLAND, OREGON EXAMPLE

3. TELLURIDE, COLORADO EXAMPLE

4. REGIONAL APPROACH



1. SOME QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER:

- *What is the uniqueness of our region?*
- *How do we get past win/lose framing?*
- *What a regional approach might look like?*

2. PORTLAND, OREGON

Portland is a community that is often held up as an example of a place that has done better than most at both building a vibrant city that is a good place for people and protecting the environment.

Notes from Portland: A Positive Epidemic of Civic Engagement¹

- Civic Engagement has been a key factor for Portland in getting outcomes
- Riverfront for People demonstration in 1969: City had the opportunity to widen riverside roadway with the demolition of a large building. Demonstrators said, “no, we want more access to the river, not less.” After two years, the results were a re-routing of traffic, demolition of Harbor Drive and the creation of a mile-long esplanade along the river. “Thirty years later, the park remains one of the attractions of an appealing, ‘user-friendly’ downtown.”
- Portland established an anti-sprawl “Urban Growth Boundary”, which essentially drew a line around the city outside which farms and open spaces would not be developed. It established the expectation of “infill” development or re-development of existing properties instead. The resulting increases in density increased economic diversity with renters and home-owners in the same neighborhoods and redevelopment of declining properties, which avoided some of the inner city declines in other places.
- Context:
 - “The state’s backing for the idea of public good trumping private interest supports the city’s.”

¹ Better Together: Restoring the American Community; Chapter 14; Robert D. Putnam and Lewis M. Feldstein, 2003

- City's governmental policies that support citizen activism are embedded in the decision-making process. However, "Politics in Portland isn't placid or cuddly."

Portland today: What is going on there?

Portland could become green economy capital, attorney says²

By **Eric Mortenson, The Oregonian**
March 13, 2009, 10:30AM

Portland possesses "unique advantages" to become the informal capital of the United States' green economy, according to a law firm's sustainability practice group.

Referring to work done by the **Portland Development Commission**, attorney Max M. Miller Jr. of **Tonkon Torp** said the metro region has renewable energy "talent clusters" that are 84 percent greater than similar-size regions and 43 percent greater when it comes to environmental services and recycling.

"The concept of a sustainable economy as a three-legged stool is familiar to many: economy, environment, society. PDC has its own spin: sustainable job growth; sustainable way of life; and inclusive prosperity," Miller wrote in a March 11 blog post.

Washington County's Silicon Forest "never really had a chance to rival the Silicon Valley or the Research Triangle in the race for Web-based commerce supremacy, because it was starting out from too far back in terms of both its industry base and its research base," Miller wrote.

"There is no question, though, that Portland is a leader in policies promoting transit, land-use planning, bicycling, density, a thriving central city, green buildings, and recycling. Portland may really be, rather than merely aspire to be, a front runner in the race to the most sustainable economy," he said.

3. TELLURIDE, COLORADO – WHAT IS GOING ON THERE?

- Telluride, Colorado is undertaking a planning process that acknowledges that they are a visitor-based economy (compared to a tourist-based economy) yet knowing that they can be so much more.
- Their belief is that visitors and residents share many of the same basic values. 'Who/what we are' is a draw to the area.

² http://www.oregonlive.com/environment/index.ssf/2009/03/portland_could_become_green_ec.html

TNCC: Telluride's Regional Economic Futures Task Force presents at Library: Next? 3

by Susan Viebrock

January 13, 2010



“The premise is simple: if we want a sustainable future, if Telluride wants a future at all, the region needs to be prepared. Ready, fire, aim is not an acceptable strategy.

Telluride's Regional Economic Futures Task Force is the offspring of two meetings held in 2008 and 2009: The Regional Sustainability Visioning Process and Thinking Outside the Box Canyon. Its purpose: under the banner of [The New Community Coalition](#), REFTF is meant to help our extended community identify the best – read

elegant, efficient and effective – ways to support and enhance our environment and our economy, which are joined at the hip. There is a clear need to leverage existing businesses, while identifying gap opportunities that allow people to remain part of a community that becomes multigenerational. On Monday, January 11, the Regional Economic Futures Task Force, led by spokesperson/county commissioner Joan May, presented its initial conclusions to a group of about 40 locals at Telluride's Wilkinson Public Library. The idea: gain consensus and move forward to begin work on an action plan that addresses both short- and long-term goals. And why not: the Inter-Gov committee lauded the exact same Power Point in December.

What actually happened is the room opted for the full ride, not just the T-shirt. Yes, we are a visitor-based economy – and no one is suggesting otherwise – but we are and can be so much more.

Chad Scothorn of the Cosmo summed it up this way. The Telluride region needs to "...do what we are doing better, and figure out what we're not doing and how to do it." TNCC's Sustainability Coordinator Kris Holstrom added: "And we need to figure out what we are not doing and what we actually want

4. REGIONAL APPROACH:

Scans of literature regarding taking a regional approach to balancing the economic development and environmental stewardship all reference the need for wide citizen involvement in order to get the best decisions but also acknowledge that current systems often make it difficult to get the optimal level of involvement.

Some examples of current regional approaches:

- *Water management/watersheds*
- *Air quality*
- *Economic development*

³ <http://www.tellurideinside.com/2010/01/tbcc-tellurides-regional-economic-task-force-presents-at-library-next.html>