



HOW THE ACTION AGENDA WAS DEVELOPED

In 2007, Coalition for a Livable Future and Portland State University Population Research Center and Institute for Portland Metropolitan Studies unveiled the ground-breaking *Regional Equity Atlas*. One of the first of its kind in the country, the Atlas examines how benefits and burdens of development are distributed in the region. It reveals gaps in access to housing, quality education, parks, transit, and food – foundations for individual and community health, prosperity, and sustainability – by some of our region's most vulnerable populations.

With the Regional Equity Atlas in hand, CLF used workshops, community forums, one-on-one meetings, listserves and blogs to share the findings with policymakers, community and business leaders, and residents as broadly as possible throughout the region. The goal of this outreach effort was threefold: First, we wanted to test the findings of the Atlas against the first-hand experience and knowledge of community members. Second, we wanted to train community members and organizations how to navigate the Atlas to support their work for social equity. Finally, we aimed to start a community dialogue about solutions.

Through our outreach efforts we engaged over 3,000 individuals and gathered hundreds of proposals for how to address inequality in our region. To synthesize ideas and narrow the list, volunteers making up the Equity Action Agenda Committee evaluated proposals using the following criteria:

PREVALENCE: Solution addresses a problem that is found throughout the region or portion of the region.

SERIOUSNESS: Solution addresses an issue that is of high importance, and has a profound effect on quality of life.

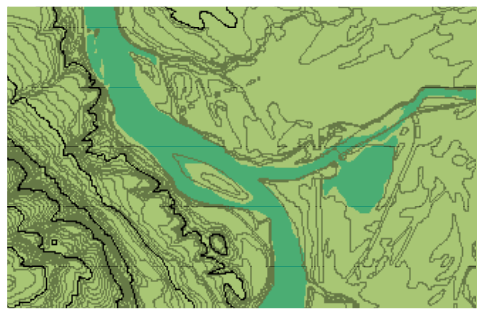
ACTIONABLE: There is a concrete solution that will achieve a measurable result both in the long term and the short term.

CROSS-ISSUE: Solution addresses multiple issues or brings together various sectors.

ACHIEVABLE: Solution is feasible and sustainable in terms of stakeholder buy-in, cost, timeline, and its capacity to build on efforts already underway.

RESONANT: Solution aligns with the regional equity principles and CLF mission.

The third, and culminating stage of our outreach occurred at the CLF 2008 Annual Regional Livability Summit. Over 300 participants worked in multi-disciplinary groups whose topics were formulated around the most promising strategies that emerged from our community outreach:



1. Building a Sustainable Economy: Green Jobs and Green, Community-Owned Enterprises
2. Creating and Preserving Quality Affordable Housing
3. Achieving Equitable Transportation and Affordable Transit Oriented Development
4. Accounting for Social Equity and Opportunity
5. Encouraging Asset and Wealth Building
6. Schools as Community Sustainability Centers
7. Crafting Equitable Climate Policy

Following the Summit, CLF staff conducted research on best practices and met with organizations that are leading campaigns on emerging Equity Action Agenda initiatives to finalize the Agenda.

LEARN MORE & JOIN THE EFFORT

To learn more about the Regional Equity Atlas Project, including the findings of the ground-breaking research, or to find out how you can get more involved in the growing movement for regional equity, visit www.equityatlas.org.

PRINCIPLES OF REGIONAL EQUITY

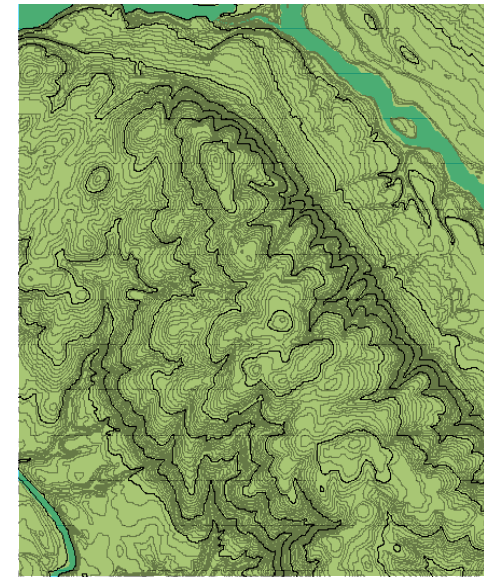
- (1) All residents have access to opportunities for meeting basic needs and advancing their health and well-being;
- (2) The distribution of benefits and burdens of growth, economic wealth, and political capital are equitably distributed, within and between generations, across the region.
- (3) All residents and communities are involved fully as equal partners in public decision-making.

A PLAN FOR ADVANCING SUSTAINABILITY IN THE PORTLAND-VANCOUVER AREA SO THAT ALL PEOPLE CAN PARTICIPATE AND PROSPER

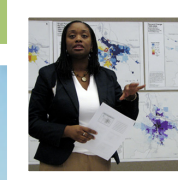
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OPPORTUNITY FOR ALL REGIONAL EQUITY ACTION AGENDA

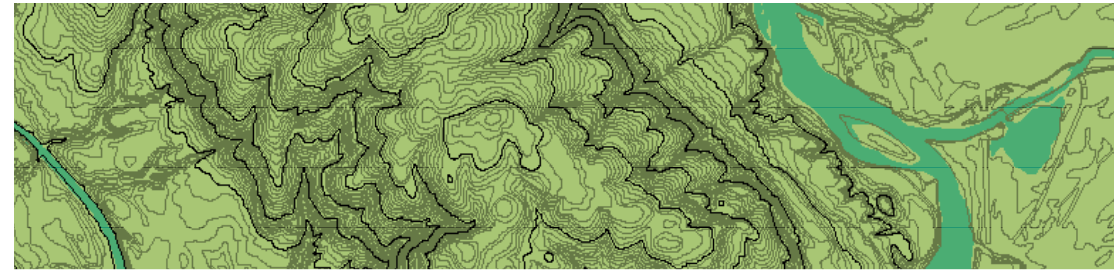


To achieve true sustainability, we must build upon our leadership in green development and go further— toward full inclusion, toward reduced disparities, toward equality. We must pay special attention to and work with the people in our communities who encounter barriers to opportunity that cannot be overcome through hard work and perseverance alone. We must tear down the walls that block opportunity so that all residents in our region can enjoy, contribute to, and participate in creating a healthy future.

Our region is known for smart, innovative urban planning, leadership in the sustainability movement, and exceptional public participation in civic life. We believe that if we tap into these talents and work together, in a way that includes ALL communities, we can build a better, healthier future for everyone. Sustainability means that everyone is included in our region's prosperity, civic life and connections to both built and natural environments. This is what the Regional Equity Action Agenda hopes to accomplish.

REGIONAL EQUITY ACTION AGENDA

Each of us deserves the support of our land and community so that we are able to grow, blossom and in due time, to nurture the community and land. Regional prosperity unfolds with every genuine personal success. Therefore, an essential element of our approach is to develop and promote collaborative leadership originating from communities that have been depleted through marginalization and systemic abuse. Yet, the success of the Equity Agenda is ultimately dependent on how well the benefits of each initiative transform opportunity and diminish inequality—particularly race and income inequity—in every resident's life.



WWW.EQUITYATLAS.ORG

HEALTHY PLACES INITIATIVES: INCREASING ACCESS TO HEALTHY COMMUNITIES

Initiative 1. Secure ongoing local, regional, and state revenue to develop and preserve affordable homes to meet regional needs.

Support the Oregon Housing Alliance legislative agenda aimed at raising \$100 million in new funding for housing.

Advocate for increasing the portion of urban renewal district funding for affordable housing.

Initiative 2. Promote strategies for mixed-income, transit accessible, 20-minute communities where residents are nearby nature, able to travel by foot or bike to work, shopping, school, parks and urban agriculture where they feel a sense of community.

Secure full funding for Metro's Regional Revolving Loan Fund and work to ensure that loan recipients plan to build green, mixed-use, mixed income projects that are linked with parks and natural areas within walking distance of residents.

Promote incentives and policy changes that increase the linkage between affordable housing and transit, bike and pedestrian investment through relevant regional transportation programs.

Support incentives for employer-assisted housing that aims to support worker's ability to live close to their workplaces prioritizing low-wage workers.

Promote policy changes that will increase efficient use of land, lower construction costs, make housing more affordable, and free up land for permanent greenspace and habitat protection, and other public uses.

Support mandatory and incentive zoning strategies to increase affordable housing supply and disperse affordable units throughout communities.

Support strategies that create and ensure home ownership opportunities in perpetuity.

Link investments in affordable housing with investments in public greenspace, including projects that convert brownfields to greenspaces with adjacent affordable housing.

Promote public policy that increases opportunities for urban agriculture (home, school, community gardens).

Increase food outlets selling healthy food and decrease food outlets selling unhealthy food.

Initiative 3. Develop and promote policies to implement a regional system of parks and natural areas in low-income, park deficient neighborhoods that provide safe places for children to play, structured activities for youth and social gathering spaces for families.

Advocate for a portion of all local open spaces bond measures to be dedicated to increasing the percentage of the population living within 1/4 mile walking distance of a park or natural area.

Advocate for capacity-building grants targeted to low-income neighborhoods, identified in the Equity Atlas as park or natural area deficient, in order to green under-natured or park deficient areas via Metro's Nature in the Neighborhood Capital Grants Program or other funding sources.

Initiative 4. Improve systems for addressing substandard housing through improved education, dispute resolution, housing code development and housing code enforcement.

Initiative 5. Redevelop brownfields and other contaminated sites, prioritizing projects in the region's most vulnerable and neglected neighborhoods and fostering community-based decision making on future uses for redeveloped sites.

Initiative 6. Promote equitable regional and state greenhouse gas emissions reduction programs to advance climate justice.

Initiative 7. Promote the redesign of school facilities to provide healthy learning environments for students and that serve as cultural, recreation, and education centers for surrounding communities, while also supporting healthy natural systems.

HEALTHY PEOPLE INITIATIVES: IMPROVING ACCESS TO EDUCATION, JOBS AND ASSETS

Initiative 1. Expand financial education, asset building, and small business opportunity programs in low-income communities and communities of color.

Endorse creation of additional categories of Individual Development Accounts (IDAs) and new funding at the state level as a new source of funds for IDAs.

Support the expansion of asset-building opportunities for renters, focusing on expanding IDA asset categories for long-term equity building to include more than just homeownership.

Support increased investment by the state in microenterprise loans and programs through existing Community Development Financial Institutions.

Initiative 2. Expand the Earned Income Tax Credit in Oregon and return millions of dollars to the poorest working families with children to help pay for basic necessities.

Initiative 3. Improve oversight and consumer protections for consumer loan borrowers and create additional tools to help homeowners avoid foreclosure.

Initiative 4. Incubate and promote community-owned, green, affordable, mixed-use development projects that provide ownership and employment opportunities to low-income people.

Initiative 5. Increase ride sharing programs, ensuring their accessibility by populations most in need.

Initiative 6. Promote culturally competent curriculum, programs and standards in schools, that prepare youth to create a thriving, just, and sustainable world.

Support a culturally-relevant curriculum that prepares students to succeed in the context of 21st century economic, social, political cultural, environmental realities.

Support initiatives to ensure culturally-relevant teacher training to promote cultural proficiency in education.

Support improved and stricter evaluation and district standards on cultural proficiency.

Initiative 7. Develop and support funding for good green living-wage jobs. These jobs should provide health benefits, career pathway opportunities and be accessible to historically disadvantaged groups.

Create a regional work force development plan for the maintenance of green infrastructure.

Pass a regional greenspaces levy to fund a Regional Conservation Corp to provide natural area stewardship and green jobs.

Identify job training and employment opportunities emerging from public investment, and ensure linkage is made to appropriate target populations. Examples of past opportunities include the 2006 Natural Areas Bond Measure; Grey to Green (Portland Bureau of Environmental Services); Healthy Streams Plan (Clean Water Services); and other green infrastructure investments by surface water management agencies and local parks departments and districts.

HEALTHY PROCESS: IMPROVING ACCOUNTABILITY AND TRANSPARENCY

Initiative 1. Promote the use of health equity criteria to evaluate projects, policies, and investments, and monitor their implementation.

Integrate equity criteria into Metro's *Making the Greatest Place* process for both land use and transportation, while concurrently promoting integration of these criteria into comprehensive plan updates which are currently underway in a dozen jurisdictions across the region.

Support targeted projects that advance equity for inclusion in the state Regional Transportation Plan. Promote projects that prioritize health, equity, climate change, and transportation choice for funding in Metro's Regional Transportation Plan.

Make congestion pricing work for working families by crafting and promoting a plan that ensures working people benefit most and low-income people are not negatively impacted.

Support efforts to increase minority contracting in publicly subsidized development projects, including linking job training and microcredit lending opportunities wherever possible. Ensure businesses provide area standard wages with benefits.

Advance the health equity recommendations of the Columbia River Crossing Health Impact Assessment (HIA) and promote the use of HIAs in other projects.

Develop and implement a third-party certification program for the equitable design, construction and investment associated with real estate development.

Initiative 2. Promote the use of data and methodologies recommended by culturally specific communities to ensure that public services and resources match the actual needs of each group.

KEY AGENDA PARTNERS

The Agenda unites the work of numerous community organizations under a common vision. In most cases, CLF's partner organizations lead the work to advance Agenda policy priorities. In some cases, CLF staff is leading. More information about the Agenda's lead partners, which initiatives they are leading, and more detail on how initiatives are being carried out is available at www.equityatlas.org. Equity Action Agenda leader organizations include:

Audubon Society of Portland
Coalition of Communities of Color
Community Alliance of Tenants
Community Health Partnership
Human Solutions
Kaiser Permanente
Mercy Corps Northwest
Multnomah County Health Equity Initiative
Oregon Action
Oregon Housing Alliance
Oregon Opportunity Network
Our Oregon
Portland Impact
Portland State University College of Urban and Public Affairs Social Equity and Opportunity Forum
Urban League of Portland
Working Families Coalition



recognizes that climate change will disproportionately impact poor and minority communities far worse than upper-income white communities unless strategic policy actions are taken to protect all citizens.

The Columbia River Crossing (CRC): A project to replace and expand the I-5 bridge over the Columbia River.

Comprehensive Plan: Legal document that directs and controls the future of land use in each jurisdiction (city/county). Comprehensive plans generally include three elements: an inventory of existing conditions which includes land uses, natural resources, natural hazards, recreational facilities, transportation facilities, and economics; goal and policy statements that indicate the general planning objectives over a specific time period; and a depiction of the desired arrangement of future land uses and development guidelines. All Oregon jurisdictions are required to develop a comprehensive plan under state land use planning law.

Congestion Pricing: A system of charging road users (most often highway commuters) a surcharge for use during high demand or peak hours. The goal is to alleviate congestion on existing roads without expanding them.

Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC): Refundable tax credit available to low income families.
Employer-Assisted Housing (EAH): Programs established by individual employers or businesses that are generally

GLOSSARY

2006 Natural Areas Bond Measure (Metro): A \$227.4 million bond measure passed by voters in 2006 to protect natural areas and lands near rivers and streams throughout the metro region. Metro's Natural Areas Program is designed to preserve natural areas at the regional, local and neighborhood levels.

20-minute Neighborhoods: Mixed-income communities in which essential needs and services are located within a 20-minute walk from homes. Services include: basic commercial retail needs (i.e., grocery stores, pharmacies, schools, post offices); public transit; recreational parks/greenspaces; and employment opportunities.

Affordable Housing: Refers to both rental and owner-occupied housing that does not exceed 30% of a household's gross income.

Brownfields: Properties where environmental contamination, or suspected contamination, prevents the redevelopment or maximum utilization of the property.

Climate Justice: Climate change mitigation efforts or campaigns that use a social equity lens. Climate justice

oriented toward low income households to provide rental assistance, homeownership education, and credit repair. Most EAH programs also help employees purchase homes – often near their workplace – by assisting with down payments.

Greenspace: Land use term used to identify areas within a jurisdiction that are protected or conserved as open natural areas with limited or no development options. Greenspace can include water and land bodies.

Grey to Green (Portland Bureau of Environmental Services): Component of the Portland Watershed Management Plan that focuses on improving the health of the city's watershed by integrating stormwater management systems and infrastructure that mimic nature.

Health Equity: A term used to address both the existence and absence of systematic health disparities that are influenced by social and built environment factors.

Health Impact Assessments (HIA): A tool used in identifying how the potential effects of a policy, program, or project may impact the health of a population as well as the distribution of those effects within the population.

Healthy Homes: Homes that are free from housing-related hazards (including building materials and maintenance control) that are linked to the development of preventable diseases and disabilities.

Healthy Streams Plan (Clean Water Services): Approved by Portland's Clean Water Services Board in June 2005, the plan outlines policy and program refinements to improve water quality, water quantity management, and aquatic species habitat.

Incentive Zoning: A reward-based system that offers development bonuses (like more units) for sites that integrate public amenities or infrastructure improvements beyond those that are legally required.

Individual Development Account (IDA): Personal savings account augmented with an incentive program that provides lower income

individuals an opportunity to accumulate assets, tax-free. Assets withdrawn from the program can be used towards education, purchasing a primary residence, or starting a business.

Making the Greatest Place (Metro): A two-year Metro planning process that evaluates where and what kinds of investments are made within the three county metro region with the intention of addressing growth and development for the next 50 years.

Microcredit Lending Opportunities: Small loans administered to individuals who are unemployed, underemployed, or living in poverty and lack collateral to access traditional lines of credit. The goal is to provide individuals outside of the traditional credit and lending structure an opportunity to build wealth and transition out of poverty.

Mixed-Use: A land use and development term that refers to areas that allow for multiple land uses within an area, for example allowing commercial use within a residential area.

Open Space: Land including public and private open and natural areas. These can be public parks and recreational areas, as well as private conservation areas and natural habitat.

Regional Transportation Plan: Required by the federal government, the RTP lists future investments in the region's transportation system, including roads, transit, bike and pedestrian improvements and investments for managing the system more efficiently.

Ride Sharing: Shared use of a vehicle by a driver and one or more passengers.

Urban Renewal: A public program aimed to encourage reinvestment in urban neighborhoods faced with issues of disinvestment or decline. Urban renewal is structured in a variety of ways although most are funded through a local tax levy or bond system. Despite the revitalizing objective of Urban Renewal programs, they have often played into institutional racism and dislocation of moderate income households.