

The EcoDistrict Initiative

Accelerating Innovation in Sustainable Urban Development



Rob Bennett, Portland + Oregon Sustainability Institute



P+OSI

Founding Partners

City of Portland, Portland State University, Portland Development Commission

Purpose

To bring together regional business, government, academics NGO and academic leaders to:

- 1. Accelerate best practices in sustainable urban development**
- 2. Strengthen the region's competitive advantage in sustainability**
- 3. Broadly communicate the region's sustainable development efforts**

The EcoDistrict Initiative

- The EcoDistrict Initiative is a multi-sector effort to implement a green neighborhood strategy that includes innovation in **POLICY, INVESTMENTS, AND RESEARCH.**
- Drawing from global and national best practices in sustainable urban development.
- Coordination and alignment of the public, private and NGO sectors.
- P+OSI providing facilitation, long-term vision and policy development.

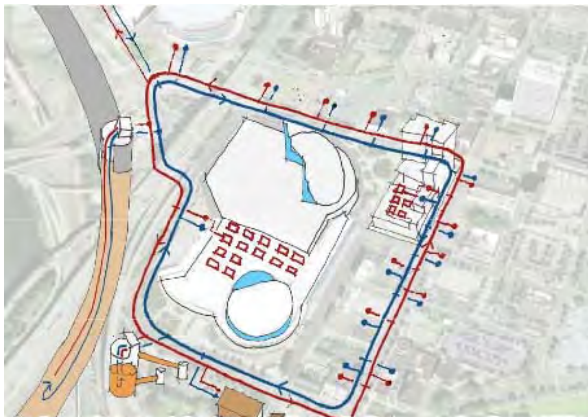
Why the District Scale?

- An appropriate scale to test integrated sustainability strategies
 - Quick innovation cycles
 - Leveraging existing civic & physical infrastructure (utilities, business associations, etc.)
 - Small enough for nimble decision making & monitoring



Building a Critical Mass of Best Practices

- Smart Grid
- District Energy
- Energy Services / Financing for Existing Buildings
- Net Zero Buildings
- Electric Vehicle Grid
- Transportation Demand Management & Pricing
- Distributed Water Management



Building a Critical Mass of Best Practices

- Linking best practices to an overall development strategy
- Creation of demand management regimes
- Finding compelling economics from co-developing sustainability projects
 - Example: integrated water and energy infrastructure
- Policy and governance to support EcoDistrict development

Creating Export Expertise Strategy

Portland as a living laboratory to test sustainability strategies

- Building expertise for an EcoDistrict development service industry
- Drawing on research from Oregon universities
- Building on the region's progressive sustainability policymaking

Milestones for Year One

- **March 2009: EcoDistrict framework drafted**
- **July 2009: Mayor's Sub-cabinet on EcoDistricts formed**
- **September 2009: Technical Advisory Committee formed (TAC)**
- **October 2009: EcoDistrict Summit**
- **January 2010: Framework completed**
- **February-July 2010: Pilot implementation and EcoDistricts tool development**

What Does Success Look Like?

- 1.** Neighborhoods that meet environmental performance goals (carbon, energy, transportation)
- 2.** Improved social and economic conditions associated with creating green neighborhoods
- 3.** Quickening innovation cycle for district scale solutions – products, services, behavior
- 4.** Robust export for regional companies and policy makers