MORE THAN JUST A CO-BENEFIT: KEEPING PORTLAND’S SUSTAINABILITY EDGE THROUGH SOCIAL AND RACIAL EQUITY

Greg Schrock
Portland/Mult Co CAP Equity Scan 11/13/2013
About me ...

- My primary interest is in opportunity in the labor market
  - Workforce development programs
  - Policies for “opportunity targeting,” such as first source/local hire policies, linked to EcDev/job creation efforts
Across the country...

- Schrock, Bassett and Green: Analysis of 28 recently completed CAPs and Sustainability Plans from large (top 100) US cities
- Only 11 of 28 (39%) made equity a prominent theme
- But nearly 60% of plans completed in 2009 or later
- Especially common among “second generation” plans
CAP Update Equity Scan

- How well did the 2009 Portland/Multnomah County CAP address equity?
  - Were opportunities capitalized upon or not?
  - Were there unanticipated burdens from the CAP’s actions?

- How can the 2013 CAP update strengthen its focus on equity?
Equity was a prominent frame, but largely disconnected from actions and specific disparities.

Equity “co-benefits” likely but not readily knowable:
- “Who/where” and “How” of implementation unclear

No obvious equity burdens directly linked to CAP, indirect impacts possible but not addressed.
2013 CAP Update Should:

- Make social and racial equity a top-level commitment and priority;
- Connect the plan’s strategies and actions to documented disparities and community goals;
- Articulate metrics for progress on those disparities and equity goals; and
- Facilitate implementation by providing useful guidance for planners, policy makers and the involved public.
Building on progress...
Some examples

Implementation of the climate action recommendations should not exacerbate existing social and economic inequalities and should, whenever possible, contribute to reducing those inequalities.
Making a Commitment to Equity in the 2013 CAP Update

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>An equitable Portland is...</th>
<th>Present inequities and disparities</th>
<th>How the CAP will promote equity and reduce disparities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Healthy</td>
<td>Communities of color and low-income populations suffer disproportionately from acute and chronic illness due to social, economic and environmental factors, reducing their opportunities and life chances.</td>
<td>The CAP will mitigate environmental factors leading to health disparities, such as barriers to active lifestyles and transportation, pollution exposure, disparate access to greenspace and other natural amenities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Safe and Livable</td>
<td>Communities of color and low-income populations live disproportionately in housing that is unaffordable and neighborhoods that are unsafe, reducing their quality of life.</td>
<td>The CAP will promote investments in housing energy efficiency that will make them safer, more comfortable and affordable, and in community infrastructure that enhances pedestrian and bike safety, and other elements of livability.</td>
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# Making a Commitment to Equity in the 2013 CAP Update

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<td><strong>Accessible</strong></td>
<td>Communities of color and low-income populations live disproportionately in “low opportunity” and “incomplete” neighborhoods, and are disproportionately transit-dependent.</td>
<td>The CAP will promote investments that improve neighborhood accessibility, by bringing services to underserved neighborhoods and supporting equitable expansions of public transit and active transportation infrastructure.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Prosperous</strong></td>
<td>Communities of color experience persistent disparities in poverty, incomes and wealth relative to White populations, and they and other low-income populations encounter significant economic, spatial and institutional barriers to opportunity, upward mobility and wealth creation.</td>
<td>The CAP will promote the creation of employment and small business opportunities with potential to lift up and empower households and communities, and maximize that potential through equitable hiring and contracting policies that target those opportunities toward historically underrepresented populations.</td>
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# Making a Commitment to Equity in the 2013 CAP Update

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<td>Inclusive</td>
<td>Communities of color and low-income populations have <strong>lacked representation and power in planning and other public decision-making processes</strong>, resulting in a bias toward the goals, priorities and perspectives of White, middle- and upper-class residents.</td>
<td>Communities of color and other historically underrepresented populations <strong>will be included in every step of the CAP process</strong>, from the definition of goals to implementation. Proactive, culturally-appropriate strategies will be undertaken to <strong>reach out to these populations and involve and empower them</strong> through the CAP’s actions and programs.</td>
</tr>
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Facilitating Equity-Oriented Implementation

- Developing a specific set of “equity lens” questions for types of actions and policies in the CAP
  - Regulations
  - Public programs, investments and government operations
  - Market transformation
  - Planning and public outreach and education
Regulations

- Limit the activities of private actors that generate excessive carbon emissions, or threaten natural systems important to preparation and adaption to climate change.

- Does the regulation generate cost burdens, either directly or indirectly, to communities of color and low-income communities?

- **Equity considerations:**
  - Is the activity or outcome being regulated related to a documented disparity? Does it mitigate that disparity?
  - What are the costs? How are they borne?
  - To the extent the costs fall disproportionately on low-income households, can this be mitigated?
Public programs, investments, gov’t operations

- Range of activities that includes shorter-term programmatic efforts but also longer-term capital investments in infrastructure.

- *Can the benefits be targeted in progressive ways to reduce historical and current disparities?*

- **Equity considerations:**
  - Do benefits of program relate to documented disparities?
  - Are LI/COC stakeholders being involved and empowered?
  - Can benefits be targeted to particular neighborhoods or communities of need?
  - Who is doing the work? What is the quality of jobs?
  - How is program funded? Is it funded through regressive source?
  - Do investments potentially contribute toward displacement?
Market transformation

- Attempt to stimulate/catalyze market for “climate preferable” goods and services, through subsidies, tech assistance, etc.

- Are benefits of this new market’s goods and services broadly accessible to households throughout the community?

- Equity considerations:
  - To what extent would provision of this good address documented disparities/inequities facing LI/COC?
  - Does market transformation have potential to negatively affect market for existing goods and services that LI/COC population depends on?
Planning and public outreach

- Actions calling for planning, assessment, public outreach, and education.

- Are low-income communities and communities of color, and other vulnerable, impacted populations, being engaged and empowered in a meaningful, authentic and culturally appropriate manner?

- Equity considerations (from BPS Decision Support Tool)
  - What strategies are to be undertaken to engage with all relevant stakeholders, including LI/COC populations, and to enhance their power?
  - How will racial and social impact criteria be used in stakeholder decisionmaking processes?
  - Is the language used to market programs geared toward a mainstream, educated, middle and high income audience? Is there a direct plan on how to market the program to historically under-represented communities of color?
Measuring progress

- Chapter-level crosswalks to documented disparities and equity goals
- Goals and metrics relating to:
  - Equitable provision of services and benefits
  - Reduction of disparities
Measuring Progress

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<th>Potential Goals/Metrics</th>
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<tr>
<td>1) Buildings and Energy</td>
<td>• Housing cost burden</td>
<td>• Equitable provision of publicly-subsidized energy efficiency services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Housing quality and safety</td>
<td>• Improvements in home energy performance/energy savings by neighborhood</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Underrepresentation of women and minorities in building trades occupations/</td>
<td>• Improvements in indoor air quality / reduction in asthma morbidity rates</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>contracting</td>
<td>• MWESB contracting goals for EE/RE programs</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>• Underrepresented population hiring targets for EE/RE contractors</td>
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| 2) Urban form and mobility | • Neighborhood “completeness”  
• Transit access  
• Walkability and Bikability  
• Pedestrian safety  
• Obesity rates | • Equitable provision of transportation and transit infrastructure and safety improvements  
• Reduction in neighborhood disparities in “completeness”, transit access, ped safety, walkability, bikability  
• Changes in bike counts by neighborhood, or other measures of active transportation utilization |
## Measuring Progress

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<td><strong>3) Consumption and Solid Waste</strong></td>
<td>• Exposure to solid waste processing/ municipal recycling facilities</td>
<td>• Equitable utilization of recycling and composting services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Recycling program access/utilization</td>
<td>• Equitable siting/expansion of solid waste/recycling facilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>4) Urban forestry and natural systems</strong></td>
<td>• Tree canopy cover</td>
<td>• Equitable provision of urban forestry investments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Ambient air quality (number of times above benchmark level)</td>
<td>• Reduction in neighborhood disparities in:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Asthma rates</td>
<td>o  tree canopy cover</td>
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<tr>
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<td>o  air quality</td>
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<tr>
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<td>o  ER visits for respiratory distress</td>
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## Measuring Progress

### Chapter Disparities Potential Goals/Metrics

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| 5) Food and Agriculture      | • Food insecurity rates  
• Access to healthy food sources/ exposure to unhealthy food sources  
• Health disparities related to diet: Obesity, diabetes, cardiovascular disease rates | • Reduced neighborhood disparities in access to grocery store or fresh food sources  
• Share of SNAP users participating in farmer’s markets, CSAs and food buying co-ops  
• Equitable access to community gardens/urban ag infrastructure |
| 6) Community engagement      | • Underrepresentation/lack of empowerment of LI/COCs in planning processes  
• Inaccessible/ inappropriate public engagement materials | • Equitable representation of high-need and vulnerable communities in CAP process  
• Reduced disparities in participation of high-need and vulnerable communities in CAP-related events |
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<td>7) Climate change preparation</td>
<td>• Vulnerability to extreme weather events/social vulnerability</td>
<td>• Reduced neighborhood disparities in Green Infrastructure access</td>
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<td>• Urban heat island effect impacts</td>
<td>• Reduced disparities in heat island effect impacts</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Incidence of heat-related illness</td>
<td>• Reduced disparities in heat related illness</td>
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<td>• Equitable distribution of emergency preparedness infrastructure (e.g., cooling centers)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8) Local government operations</td>
<td>• Disparities in government contracting</td>
<td>• MWESB goals for public contracts related to greening government operations</td>
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<td>• Workforce diversity</td>
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Measuring Progress

- Key issues:
  - Linking spatial data to social and racial disparities
    - e.g., disparity indices of neighborhood completeness by demographic and socioeconomic categories
  - Collecting, tracking, and analyzing program data
Conclusion

- **Bringing equity (back) into sustainability**
  - Top-level commitment is critical – every plan, every investment is a good opportunity to address equity
  - Think, talk about distributional impacts – not just by class but also by race/ethnicity – and then **act**!
  - Go beyond “green ribbons” in the process

- **Bringing sustainability into equity**
  - Recognize where equity/disparity concerns overlap with climate/sustainability concerns
  - Build long-term community capacity for engagement in sustainability conversations