

Local Governments, Social Equity, and Sustainable Communities

Advancing Social Equity Goals to Achieve Sustainability



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Since the 1980s, sustainability—defined as measures taken to protect and enhance the environment, the economy, and equity for current residents and future generations—has become an issue of increasing importance both domestically and internationally. In the past decade, local governments have demonstrated increasing leadership in this area. Some exemplary local government officials have worked in partnership with businesses, nonprofits, community organizations, and residents to collaboratively develop programs to create more vibrant, resilient communities.

In 2010, ICMA conducted its Local Government Sustainability Policies and Programs Survey and found that most local governments were still in the early stages of addressing sustainability. Most placed emphasis on long-standing areas of commitment such as recycling and the environment as well as on new areas such as energy conservation, but only a minority of governments had developed comprehensive sustainability programs (Svara, Read, and Moulder 2011). Few were adopting measures to promote social equity.

Without a strong commitment to social equity, local governments have moved only part of the way toward achieving true sustainability. The experience of American urban areas shows that inequality and social exclusion are not sustainable practices because they undermine the viability of communities. Thus communities might have programs that protect the natural environment, reduce energy use, and address other aspects of sustainability, but without programs to promote social equity, they are not strengthening their social foundation for long-term viability.

This research examines the extent to which social equity activities are included within an integrated approach to sustainability, how social equity is defined, and the level of commitment of local governments in addressing equity issues. Social equity means redressing injustices and remediating damages that were previously incurred, fully incorporating all segments of the community in the political process, and establishing measures to prevent future inequities from occurring (Johnson and Svara 2011). Such efforts include expanding opportunity and promoting equal access to public services, providing equal service quality, ensuring procedural fairness, and striving for equal opportunity in such areas as education, health, and employment. The social equity dimension of sustainability refers to how burdens and benefits of different policy actions are distributed in a community. The more evenly they are distributed, the more equitable the community is, and this is reflected in economic, ecologic, and social outcomes.

This report describes the current activities, leading practices, and achievements of sustainable communities. Such communities were created through a comprehensive, integrated approach to sustainability supported by inclusive engagement, equal access to services, and livable neighborhoods. The analysis examines all local governments that responded to the ICMA 2010 survey, focusing in particular the characteristics of the minority of governments—fewer than 1 in 10—that are very active in social equity. Using additional information from a follow-up survey

conducted in 2012, the analysis explores the adoption of a wider range of equity activities. From these surveys, nine local governments were identified for in-depth examination as case studies.

Key Observations from Case Studies

1. Inclusive citizen engagement has played a critical role in improving the quality of public projects, improving relationships between the public and city government, and increasing the overall quality of life for community residents.
2. Formal and informal networks of service providers and stakeholders are needed to advance social equity goals.
3. Clearly articulating the importance of social equity in local government mobilizes support and resources.
4. A holistic approach to comprehensively serving the needs of the most marginalized groups in a community is critical to achieving social equity.
5. In local governments that are truly pursuing a holistic approach to sustainability, sustainability activities are dispersed throughout a number of departments in local governments. Formal sustainability offices rarely encapsulate all sustainability activities undertaken by the local government as a whole.
6. There are a number of organizing themes by which the objectives of sustainability and social equity can be achieved. In cases where there is a tradition of supporting other goals or where sustainability, climate change, or equity is a particularly politically sensitive topic, other organizing strategies can be successful in achieving desired outcomes.
7. Local governments can encourage the acceptance of certain initiatives (for example, affordable housing or housing that is universally accessible, green building, or an increased number of healthy food outlets in the community) by well-designed incentives that avoid unintended barriers to desired projects.
8. Targeted outreach and assistance are required to involve low-income households in energy conservation projects and other sustainability projects, thereby extending the benefits of these programs to persons in need.
9. The support of elected leadership for sustainability and social equity initiatives is crucial for the long-term commitment necessary to achieve positive results. In the absence of such leadership, resources may be redistributed to address other priorities, thereby diminishing the positive impact that sustainability programs might otherwise achieve.
10. Leadership on social equity–related initiatives can come from staff members in all areas of local government, and social service–oriented staff is required for success. Such initiatives can be pursued laterally and vertically.
11. Restoring the physical assets of the past in the downtown and neighborhoods to preserve history and cultural traditions provides a foundation for revitalization and new development in distressed neighborhoods.
12. Current performance metrics in social equity leave a considerable amount to be desired, and measures that integrate social equity with environmental and economic indicators in sustainability plans are often largely absent. Public health seems to be the area of social equity in which indicators are most developed.

Many communities (both surveyed and selected for case study) have an extensive range of sustainability activities, such as affordable housing programs, wellness initiatives, preschool programs, and actions to promote job creation. However, surprisingly few of these governments are organizing and resourcing their sustainability initiatives in a coordinated manner or through a comprehensive plan. Fewer still are addressing social equity issues as an integrated part of their sustainability strategies. From these observations, a few key recommendations made include the following:

- It is important to get local governments that are overall leaders in sustainability more involved in social equity, as they have a lot of sustainability experience to build on and some supportive policy priorities.
- Local governments with leading practices in sustainability and social equity can serve as examples to other governments that have not yet made a substantial commitment to social equity or even to sustainability.
- Much progress can be achieved by moving the majority of local governments from below-average to average levels of activity in sustainability overall and in social equity.

The conclusion of this report describes alternative explanations for the interconnection of equity and sustainability and suggests approaches for expanding equity and integrating it with other components of a community's sustainability program. Some governments make an open, comprehensive commitment to sustainability that fully incorporates social inclusion and opportunity for all members of the community, and they support that commitment with planning and assessment. Other governments avoid the possibly contentious ideas of sustainability or equity and instead stress the key qualities and values that sustainability promotes: livability for all residents and long-term viability for the community as a whole. These governments identify the activities needed to achieve livability and viability and measure the progress in realizing them. Their approach is consistent with general definitions of sustainability, but it focuses on the special conditions of local governments.

The key point for promoting social equity activities is that exclusion and inequality are not sustainable practices. Put simply, we're all in this together economically, socially, and environmentally. If we want livable and viable communities, we must pursue a comprehensive approach to sustainability that includes social equity.

INTRODUCTION

Little is known about how local governments incorporate social equity into their activities to promote sustainability. What are the activities related to social equity and to what extent are local governments pursuing them? It is important to increase understanding about how governments articulate the connection between equity and other dimensions of sustainability. Definitions of *sustainability* often refer to the “three E’s”—environment, economy, and equity; in practice, however, the equity dimension receives less attention and may not even be incorporated in a government’s sustainability program. Obviously, this would be true if the local government has few programs that address equity issues, but does the failure to make the linkage also happen in local governments that actively promote equity, inclusion, and social justice?

This study examines the results of a national survey of the full range of local governments’ sustainability activities conducted by ICMA in 2010 with more than 2,000 responding governments. It also draws on a 2012 follow-up survey of 300 selected governments that focused on social equity activities. The initial survey provided some insights about the extent of social equity activity as part of the overall sustainability program in local governments. Analysis of the 2010 survey examines variation in the use of 10 activities related to social equity and identifies the kinds of governments that have adopted most of these activities (“high-equity” governments). The 2010 survey suggested, and the 2012 survey confirmed, that governments that have little or no involvement in equity programs are also not likely to be active in general sustainability efforts. A group of local governments of special interest from the 2010 survey are those that are active in sustainability generally but do little related to equity (“low-equity” governments). The similarities and differences between these high- and low-equity governments based on the 2010 survey are examined.

Two types of new data collection were used in the project. First, the follow-up survey in 2012 was sent to the high- and low-equity governments identified in the 2010 survey in order to examine in detail the breadth and depth of social equity activities by these governments that have a high overall sustainability commitment. From the respondents to this survey, nine local governments, including combinations of governments that are highly active in social equity, were selected to be case studies. The case studies provide additional information about the range of activities and the involvement of governmental and community organizations to support them. Furthermore, the interviews and reviews of documents in each case study site were examined for explanations of the rationale for the sustainability program and the extent to which social equity is incorporated in the overall approach. The results show that some governments have fully integrated all activities into their sustainability programs, whereas others have active sustainability programs and extensive social equity activities but make little connection between them. This report examines the implications of these different approaches.

The report begins with a review of sustainability and the recent but growing involvement of local governments in sustainability. To provide a framework for understanding how the equity dimension can be organized, it provides a summary of the sustainability programs in governments recognized

as leaders in comprehensive approaches. It then presents the results of the analysis of the 2010 survey, the 2012 follow-up survey, and the case studies, and it concludes with key findings and recommendations.

Definitions of Sustainability and Sustainable Communities

The long-standing definition of sustainable development from the Brundtland Commission (1987) is still a useful starting point: “Sustainable development is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. . . . Even the narrow notion of physical sustainability implies a concern for social equity between generations, a concern that must logically be extended to equity within each generation” (41). The idea of sustainability contained in this definition was elaborated on at the Rio Earth Summit in 1992 and presented in *Agenda 21*, the preamble to which calls for the removal of disparities (especially poverty) and environmental degradation by integrating environment, social, and economic approaches in order to secure a better future:

Humanity stands at a defining moment in history. We are confronted with a perpetuation of disparities between and within nations, a worsening of poverty, hunger, ill health and illiteracy, and the continuing deterioration of the ecosystems on which we depend for our well-being. However, integration of environment and development concerns and greater attention to them will lead to the fulfilment (*sic*) of basic needs, improved living standards for all, better protected and managed ecosystems and a safer, more prosperous future (UNCED 1992).

Virtually from the beginning of the international discussion of the issue, sustainability was linked to the integrated concern for intergenerational environmental, economic, and social well-being. The intergenerational dimension and the commitment to shared benefits point to the importance of social equity as part of a local government strategy to promote sustainability.

ICMA has adapted the definition of sustainability to further emphasize the positive benefits to local governments and communities: “Sustainability is the ability of communities to consistently thrive over time as they make decisions to improve the community today without sacrificing the future” (McGalliard 2012, 2). These definitions do not, however, provide an explicit reference to equity, and they fail to identify its parameters. What aspects of the “needs of the present” are addressed? To what extent do all “thrive” and share in the opportunity for improved conditions? Are the costs and benefits of environmental policies evenly distributed?

This study examines the nature and extent of policies and programs aimed at advancing social equity in U.S. local governments. It explores how the equity commitment is articulated and linked to the environmental and economic aspects of sustainability. The research seeks to clarify whether social equity is integral to sustainability, only partially related to sustainability, or a separate strategy that should be considered for its own sake and justified independently from other policy goals.

Social equity refers to the redress of injustices and remediation of damages that were previously incurred; the full incorporation of all segments of the community in the political process; and measures to prevent inequities by addressing those concerns on the front end of the policy process (Johnson and Svava 2011).¹ These efforts include expanding opportunity and promoting equal access to public services, providing equal service quality, ensuring procedural fairness, and striving for equal outcomes in areas such as education, health, and employment.

As an orientation to governance, social equity stresses fairness and equality along with efforts to remedy disparities in conditions and outcomes. It includes redressing injustices and restoring equality through the provision of benefits to those who have been unfairly treated, and remediating damages that were previously incurred. It means expanding opportunity and promoting equal access to services; providing equal quality of programs and services; ensuring procedural fairness to prevent discriminatory treatment; and striving for equal protection from hazards and equal outcomes in education, health, and employment. Essential to these goals are the full engagement of all segments of the community in the process of governance and the empowerment of individuals to improve their own lives (Johnson and Svava 2011). Reducing inequalities and expanding access to basic services such as education and health care can be the spark that lights an ideological debate, especially in our current highly polarized environment, where the rights and subsequent responsibilities of individuals are often at the base of strong political disagreements. It is increasingly recognized, however, that communities are not viable if they are divided between the haves and have-nots.

Overview and Brief History of Local Government Interventions to Create More Sustainable Communities

Environmental, economic, and equity concerns have been the focus of enormous domestic and international attention over the years. Regarding the environment, concerns about water and air quality appeared on the policy agendas of multiple countries as early as the 1970s. In the United States, heightened concerns about the environment produced greater interest in recycling in the 1970s, and energy shortages later in the decade increased interest in reducing consumption of gas and oil. The formation of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the passage of the Clean Air Act in 1970, followed by major amendments to the Federal Water Pollution Control Act in 1972, signaled the broad-based commitment to protecting the environment. The laws set in motion increased activity in local governments to ensure their compliance.

Federal programs to reduce poverty had been refocused and expanded in 1964, and new approaches to neighborhood renewal were found in the Model Cities program of 1966 and the Community Development Block Program of 1974. The U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) was established in 1966, and the Urban Mass Transportation Administration (now the Federal Transit Administration) was established in 1968. State and local initiatives and reforms promoted by professional associations brought changes to programs and practices in recreation, policing, health, and social work.

¹ Johnson and Svava draw on the work of the Panel on Social Equity in the National Academy of Public Administration.

Economic development has been a persistent interest of federal, state, and local policymakers. Local governments have long recognized advantages of economic growth, which they have sought to promote through a number of incentives and strategies since the “smokestack chasing” industrial recruitment of the 1930s (Munnich 1995). Recent studies have suggested that economic development incentives for specific companies and industries did not improve local economic conditions (Betz et al. 2012). A number of other tools, such as tax and financial incentives, the building of local companies, and educational and workforce development programs, have been created and tested as the field has evolved (Koven and Lyons 2010). Recently, increased attention has been given to the economic benefits of improving energy efficiency, expanding renewable energy, and developing “green” jobs. A significant portion of the more than \$50 billion in American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) funds designated for energy efficiency and renewable energy sectors went to cities, metropolitan areas, and states in the form of grants, tax incentives, and loan guarantees.²

In many respects, however, a comprehensive approach to sustainability was not widely incorporated in the local government discussions of policy and administrative action until the early 2000s. *Taking Sustainable Cities Seriously*, initially published by Kent Portney in 2003 (and updated in 2013), focused on “economic development, the environment, and quality of life” in selected cities that were early creators of sustainability programs. The rating of sustainability activities in the 50 largest cities in the United States began with the formation of sustainlane.com in 2004.³ In 2005, the U.S. Conference of Mayors endorsed the Mayors Climate Protection Agreement.⁴ To reduce global warming pollution levels, the agreement urged action on the national and local government levels, but it did not include any explicit references to social equity. Five years later, among the city governments that responded to ICMA’s sustainability survey, only 13% (281) had adopted the agreement (Svara 2011).⁵ During this period, a number of states passed legislation requiring that local governments meet sustainability standards. Congress passed the Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant (EECBG) program to support local governments and other entities in expanded energy conservation efforts, and funding was approved as part of the ARRA of 2009. These developments contributed to an expanded “discovery” of sustainability as an issue for local governments.

There were a number of important predecessors to the movement toward sustainability in the United States. Most directly related to the effort to balance economic growth and environmental protection was the growth management movement. Although there were local initiatives, this was primarily an effort by certain state governments—initially, Hawaii in the late 1950s, Vermont in 1970, Florida in 1972, and Oregon in 1973—to manage growth. Generally, these state growth controls “do not supersede local planning efforts but rather add another layer of control” (Levy 2003, 61). The state-imposed standards were intended to reduce sprawl and improve the provision

² For more information, see http://www.iscvt.org/who_we_are/publications/Resource-Guide-Sustainable-Economic-Development.pdf.

³ For more information, see http://www.csrwire.com/press_releases/18628-SustainLane-Announces-Annual-U-S-City-Rankings.

⁴ Available at usmayors.org/climateprotection/documents/mcpAgreement.pdf.

⁵ Another indicator of change is that only 25 governments in California had become ICLEI members between 1992 and 2005; the number was over 150 by the beginning of 2010 (Millard-Bell 2010).

of infrastructure. In 2002, the American Planning Association (APA) issued its *Growing Smart Legislative Guidebook* (2002), which provides comprehensive statutory strategies for states and regional planning authorities seeking to restrain urban growth. The guidebook offers various institutional tools and recommendations about the fit of those tools based on a specific state's political climate, and it lists the following factors that may affect the desire of states to pursue smart growth strategies:

- Desire to protect significant natural resources, such as coastal areas
- Lack of affordable housing
- Desire to ensure balanced economic growth among the state's regions
- Need to link regulation and capital investment with planning
- Lack of mechanisms to resolve interjurisdictional conflicts; lack of coordination among governmental units
- Perception that the existing system is unfair, unwieldy, unpredictable, and delay-ridden
- Loss of open space and agricultural lands
- Control of urban sprawl
- Mismatch between development and infrastructure
- Need for new planning tools and techniques.

The APA's discussion of the integrated concerns of urban sprawl, the absence of affordable housing, and the need for a better match between development and infrastructure clearly bridges the concern with state growth control and "smart growth."

The smart growth approach emerged in the late 1990s. The concept covers a variety of logical, controlled planning approaches, but the unifying theme is to concentrate on areas already developed and to preserve open space and natural resources (Kelly 2004). As noted in *The Smart Growth Manual*:

It is now clear that many current social, economic, environmental and physiological ills are direct outcomes of the way we have built our communities since World War II. Single-use zoning, massive road construction, and urban disinvestment have turned a nation of ecologically sustainable neighborhoods into a collection of far-flung monocultures, connected by the prosthetic device of the automobile. We learn from biology that monocultures cannot thrive. . . . Yet most states and municipalities still promote policies that favor single-use zoning and free-flowing traffic rather than mixed-use, pedestrian oriented urbanism (Duany, Speck, and Lydon 2010, 15).

Social equity and environmental conditions were examined together in research and activism under the banner of environmental justice or environmental racism.

The focus on these components—the environment, economy, and equity concerns operating separately or in a wide variety of cooperative approaches—helped to shape the conditions of cities and counties into the 21st century. The concept of sustainability and the overarching concern about climate change can help to foster broad integration of many or all of these components. The

question is, how extensively is social equity included as part of an integrated approach and how firmly committed are local governments to achieving social equity goals, however they are defined?

Local Government, Sustainable Communities, and Social Equity Overview

In the series foreword printed in *Taking Sustainable Cities Seriously*, the editors note that some cities have “pursued new and often creative approaches to problems as diverse as energy conservation and efficiency, transportation, land use, water use, building standards, and creation of livable communities, and have sought to integrate environmental, economic, and social goals under the general banner of sustainability” (Kamieniecki and Kraft in Portney 2013, viii). Still, under the sustainability rubric, the economy and environment generate much public discussion, and social equity is often neglected. In some ways, this is understandable: the economy is often on the minds of policymakers and their constituents. Economic concerns are dominant in the public discourse. Local governments link their well-being to growth and economic development. For the past several decades, however, there has been recognition that economic growth that exhausts resources, destroys existing structures and neighborhoods, and contaminates the environment is a short-range and short-sighted strategy. “Managed growth” and, later, “smart growth” were strategies to promote development while containing its negative effects.

Perhaps reflective of the current heightened concern regarding financial security, the phrase “economic sustainability” now seems to allude to fiscal solvency as well as to more traditional concerns about how plans for continued development can be pursued while good environmental stewardship can be achieved. Along with the search for synergistic development and preservation strategies, the worlds of economic and environmental sustainability also come together in conversations regarding a green economy, where workers trained in new, environmentally friendly technologies facilitate the creation and implementation of ecofriendly businesses, thus allowing economic growth to occur while simultaneously meeting environmentally conscious goals. Air and water pollution concerns have brought the environment into the public consciousness. As evidence continues to mount for global climate change, even more serious environmental concerns are becoming part of some mainstream policy discourses.

These approaches support the conclusion of Feiock and Coutts (2013, 1) that “despite wide acceptance of the United Nations definition, observations of sustainability plans in U.S. cities and studies of program implementation demonstrate that, in practice, sustainability often means primarily environmental sustainability, especially as it relates to the causes and consequences of climate change.” It appears that sustainability is still largely perceived as an approach to addressing long-term environmental problems. The social equity piece of the sustainability equation is often relegated to the fringe of the conversation, but there are several reasons why equity should be seen as integral to sustainability. First, equity was connected to the discussion of sustainable development because of the recognition that managed growth could increase housing prices unless measures were taken to offset the effects of limiting the supply of housing or increasing land costs.⁶ Second, concerns about environmental justice entered the discussion of sustainability with the recognition of

⁶ See <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC1448006/> for a discussion of conventional versus controlled development.

the disproportionate exposure of lower income and minority groups to pollution and environmental hazards. Third, social equity is inherent in democracy, where each person is expected to have equal ability to influence the decisions his or her government makes and therefore equal access to the resources required to take part in the political process and make informed decisions. Beyond this assurance of some basic rights, understandings of the level of resources needed to participate and of what social equity looks like in practice vary widely; these different perspectives may be the result of people holding different primary value frameworks.

Johnson and Svava offer a position on social equity that does not focus on those elements that may ideologically divide people but acknowledges that differences in society based on individual merit will occur. Importantly, however, is that “although the conditions and successes of individuals will vary greatly, in a socially equitable society, these differences are not strongly linked to membership in groups defined by characteristics such as ethnicity, race, or gender” (2011, 3). In this perspective, social equity does not mean that every person earns the same amount of money, for example, but that the income a person earns is not a function of characteristics outside of that person’s control. When a society is equitable, access to income, education, health care, and other resources is not reliant on one’s position relative to a dominant class, and the authors caution that “wide disparities in outcomes might be a signal of unequal treatment or evidence for a lack of minimal resources” (12). Thus equality of access to services and opportunities, and equality of outcomes—or, more precisely, variation in outcomes within acceptable limits—are important hallmarks of social equity.

The lack of attention local governments seem to give to the equity dimension of a robust sustainability program may be, in part, due to a failure to clearly articulate the fundamental importance of social equity in a serious sustainability program. Social equity is inherent to democracy, and it is an integral component to sustainability efforts. Residents of a community are connected economically, ecologically, and socially; the social equity dimension of sustainability refers to how burdens and benefits of different policy actions are distributed among them. The more evenly costs and benefits are distributed, the more equitable the community is, and this is reflected in economic, ecologic, and social outcomes. It is evident from the research on environmental justice that the largest proportion of environmental burdens that come from industry and energy production, disposal of waste, and transportation systems often fall on the communities that are least able to resist them; the poor and minority communities are often disproportionately burdened (Bullard 1990; Bryant and Mohai 1992; US EPA 1992).

Social equity in sustainability includes putting forth efforts toward rectifying previous environmental injustices, avoiding environmental injustices going forward, and providing equal access to participate in sustainability activities and shape their development. There is recognition that redevelopment plans of the 1950s and 1960s that were often tied to highway construction through central cities resulted in the widespread displacement of low-income groups and the businesses and social institutions that supported them, with adverse environmental effects (Zhang and Fang 2004, 286–7). However, current plans that pursue green goals and transit development can also have negative effects on the poor. This kind of approach represents the “production of vulnerabilities,” which is

“an antonym of sustainability” because it omits attention to equity impacts (Mueller and Dooling 2011, 219).

Equity in the policymaking process and the economic life of the community also means that the needs of the most marginalized populations must be addressed. Equal access to healthcare facilities, affordable housing, education, transportation, food security, and, increasingly, to the Internet, all fall under this umbrella. A community that is economically vibrant and protects its environment is still not sustainable if it marginalizes and lays the costs of its policies primarily on those members who are least able to bear them or if it excludes those members from taking advantage of the benefits of sustainability. Social, economic, and political inclusion are needed to maintain viable communities.

The poor are often the victims of adverse environmental conditions, as in the extreme example of environmental racism. Persons with limited income and restricted housing options are often the most vulnerable not only to changes that are brought about by climate change but also to the detrimental impacts of lower order environmental issues—for example, where to locate a polluting industry or landfill.⁷ An additional connection between sustainability and limited economic and political resources is the extent to which low- and moderate-income families can be full participants in sustainability programs. Are these families able to adjust their behavior to promote sustainability: are they full contributors? Are they able to access the advantages that come from participation in sustainability actions: are they full beneficiaries? It is important for low- and moderate-income families to be participants in sustainability programs and contributors to improving conditions. Although limited income reduces their consumption of resources overall, low- and moderate-income families are likely to live in less energy-efficient dwellings and drive older, more polluting vehicles. They are more likely to use existing housing stock and established infrastructure, but they often must pay the price of living in neighborhoods with physical decay and some degree of social disorder. They are also less likely to reap the benefits of sustainability actions. They pay a higher portion of their income for heating/cooling and transportation, have longer commutes, have more difficulty finding high-quality food, and have needs for public services that are often not adequately addressed.

Marginalized communities often lack basic resources. The absence of income is a uniting factor among these communities, which generally include minorities, disabled individuals, seniors, and impoverished white residents. Getting low- and moderate-income communities involved in sustainability activities will expand the range and number of people in urban communities that are changing their behaviors to reduce energy consumption, greenhouse gas emissions, and the generation of solid waste. In this current economic slowdown, providing job training, greater educational opportunities, and the like not only benefit low- and moderate-income families, but also make for a more competitive workforce needed to achieve economic sustainability. Overall sustainability may not be an important priority for individuals and families that are struggling to get by. They are less likely to have the resources to lead more sustainable lives—for example, to pay for

⁷ This is particularly true in developing countries, where low-income populations are most likely to be threatened by environmental changes resulting from global warming.

housing that is close to workplaces, buy more fuel-efficient appliances or automobiles, or even have room to store recyclables.

Failure to recognize and offset the income limitations faced by some members of the community may mean that local governments are failing to generate truly inclusive participation in sustainability programs and therefore run the risk of perpetuating existing inequities. For example, some approaches to financing solar installation require families to have income and good credit scores to take advantage of alternative energy generation options. Exclusion of the poor means that people with less income do not have the opportunity to reduce their energy bills and thus do not get to take advantage of an ongoing benefit. Beyond inclusion in specific activities, it is important that all segments of the community be able to participate in shaping the strategies and policies that are adopted in sustainability programs; that is, they must have purposeful access to the policy process.

Young (2000) suggests that democratic ends are best achieved when each person who has a justice-based claim has a voice in the decisions that are made that affect them. To be meaningful, democracy must extend beyond current jurisdictional boundaries, especially when the environment is involved. For example, decisions made regarding watersheds, air quality, or the location of a new landfill often affect people who do not reside in the jurisdictional boundaries of the government that will make the ultimate decision about them. Environmental impacts of transportation improvements are very challenging to address within jurisdictional boundaries. Therefore, in Young's perspective, a different approach to that decision-making process should be undertaken in order to achieve the most democratically defensible outcome. Although some issues that fall under the umbrella of sustainability should ideally be dealt with on some regional level that is accessible to those who are affected by the decisions being made, this coordination is still relatively uncommon.⁸

It is important to examine sustainability efforts in local governments and the variance in size, location, demographic characteristics, and type of government examined. Local governments, singly or in partnership with other governments, are major actors that can undertake sustainability activities with the opportunity for direct participation of citizens and community groups. It is at this level that each community member should have access to the decision-making process. As Portney (2013) suggests, the local government allows for consistency and thus is the best unit of analysis currently available to examine tools being used to pursue sustainable ends.

Because social equity is important to a holistic understanding of sustainability, its exclusion from sustainability discourse in some local governments is especially troubling. The economic and environmental dimensions of sustainability may seem easier to address as they are more easily

⁸ Efforts at facilitating regional sustainability coordination continue, particularly with significant investments toward this goal over the last three years (2010–13) by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development through its Sustainable Communities Regional Planning (SCRIP) grant program. The SCRIP program supports locally led collaborative efforts by a diverse group of partners representing many municipalities and organizations in a region to address issues in housing, economic and workforce development, and infrastructure for long-term, measurable success. The SCRIP program awarded over \$165 million to 74 regional grantees in 44 states in 2010 and 2011, and offered an additional \$46 million for FY 2013. See Sustainable Communities Regional Planning Grants at http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/program_offices/sustainable_housing_communities/sustainable_communities_regional_planning_grants; and Sustainable Housing and Communities Initiatives, 2013 Summary Statement and Initiatives, at <https://www.planning.org/features/2012/federalbudget.htm>.

quantified, and therefore progress in those areas, or lack thereof, may be more easily identified and addressed. Social equity concerns, on the other hand, often stem from problems that have resisted generations of attempts at redress. However, Ross (2011) notes that when local governments choose to exclude social equity from sustainability policies, sustainability is in danger of becoming a checklist of quantifiable things whose primary value is making the city more marketable rather than a standard for addressing serious environmental justice and resilience concerns:

When sustainability is defined by a set of metrics, it reflects a purely physical understanding of how societies strive to be ecologically resilient. By contrast, there are no comprehensive indexes for measuring environmental justice, no indicators for judging equity of access to the green life, and no technical quantum for assessing the social sustainability of a population (Ross 2011, electronic location 4907).

Ross is equally concerned about the ideological presumptions behind how sustainability is pursued. He fears that the neglect of social equity in sustainability discourses yields to authoritarian, top-down approaches—or approaches that solely reflect the interests of environmental activists—but fail to cultivate inclusive democracy. He is suspicious of purely economic and technical solutions to sustainability issues because these have disproportionately favored the wealthy at the expense of the poor and vulnerable. In his perspective, communities ought to approach sustainability through a participative process that yields democratically and scientifically defensible goals reflective of their values. Developing locally established performance measures for sustainability is a goal for local governments seeking to increase understanding of their sustainability programs. ICMA's 2010 survey found that one in five communities had adopted plans with specific targets or benchmarks, and several communities are in various stages of establishing indicators for sustainability (Svara, Read, and Moulder 2011, 5).

One recent and highly visible effort to define sustainability actions in a comprehensive way places great emphasis on social equity and related concepts. The STAR (**S**ustainability **T**ools for **A**ssessing and **R**ating Communities) Community Index is an attempt to develop a single, national, consensus-based framework for sustainability (STAR Communities 2012). Among the guiding principles for developing the index are the following:

- Think and act systemically
- Instill resiliency
- Foster innovation
- Redefine progress
- Live within means
- Cultivate collaboration
- Ensure equity
- Embrace diversity
- Inspire leadership
- Continuously improve.

Of that list, the three principles that are specifically related to equity are

1. *Ensure equity.* Sustainable communities allocate resources and opportunities fairly so that all people who do the full range of jobs that a community needs can thrive in it. Local governments in these communities actively eliminate barriers to full participation in community life and work to correct past injustices.
2. *Cultivate collaboration.* Sustainable communities engage all facets of society in working together for the benefit of the whole. Local governments in these communities bring government representatives, community members and organizations together and create a culture of collaboration that encourages innovation, sharing of resources, and jointly shared accountability for results.
3. *Embrace diversity.* Sustainable communities feature a tapestry of peoples, cultures and economies underpinned by a richly functioning natural environment. Local governments in these communities celebrate and foster ethnic, cultural, economic and biological diversity and encourage multiple approaches to accomplish a goal (STAR Communities 2012, 9).

The STAR Index starts with the premise that sustainability requires attention to the three pillars of environment, economy, and society. It highlights social equity as one area of measurement but integrates equity measures throughout all seven dimensions: Built Environment, Climate and Energy, Education, Arts and Community, Economy and Jobs, Equity and Empowerment, Health and Safety, and Natural Systems. Each dimension includes a number of objectives with specific outcomes for the community to strive to achieve. For example, Poverty Prevention and Alleviation, one of the five objectives within the “Equity and Empowerment” dimension, includes two community-level outcomes:

1. Demonstrate progress towards a target of no residents living below the poverty line by 2025.
2. Demonstrate a decrease over time in the percentage of residents living below the poverty line from at least 3 population subgroups (STAR Communities, 54).

The STAR Community Index is currently the most comprehensive and useful tool being used by communities to assess sustainability; however, efforts are also under way at the national and regional levels. At the national level, the Healthy Communities Transformation Initiative is being developed to establish indicators and recommend actions to improve health outcomes for residents within communities. This initiative was launched in June of 2012 through the U.S. Department of Urban Development (HUD) Office of Healthy Homes and Lead Hazard Control with the goal of developing a systematic, evidenced-based approach to help local jurisdictions assess the physical, social, and economic roots of community health at the neighborhood level and provide actionable recommendations based on that assessment.⁹

Eugénie Birch and her co-researchers view the principles of livability developed by HUD, DOT, and EPA as the first clear statement of the sustainability agenda in the United States (Birch et al. 2011).

⁹ For more information, visit <http://www.healthyhousingsolutions.com/Projects/HUDHealthyCommunitiesTransformationInitiative.aspx>.

Beginning in 2009, the federal agencies worked together under the Partnership for Sustainable Communities to develop these principles:

- Provide more transportation choices that are safe, reliable, and economical
- Promote equitable, affordable housing
- Enhance economic competitiveness
- Support existing communities
- Value communities and neighborhoods by enhancing the unique characteristics of all communities through investment in healthy, safe, and walkable neighborhoods—rural, urban, or suburban.¹⁰

A recent report from EPA related to the Partnership for Sustainable Communities broadens the principles by identifying seven common elements of smart growth, environmental justice, and equitable development (EPA 2013). Three match the principles originally developed in 2009: provide housing choices, provide transportation options, and strengthen existing communities. The four new elements are

- Facilitate meaningful community engagement in planning and land use decisions
- Promote public health and a clean and safe environment
- Improve access to opportunities and daily necessities
- Preserve and build on the features that make a community distinctive.

The list of “opportunities and daily necessities” that are to be accessible include “employment and educational opportunities services such as health clinics and child care; and amenities such as grocery stores, safe streets, and parks and recreational facilities” (iv). The effort to identify the dimensions of sustainability and the activities that advance social equity as part of a comprehensive approach continues.

¹⁰ In addition, these federal agencies encourage local government to coordinate and leverage federal policies and investment, remove barriers to collaboration, leverage funding, and increase accountability and effectiveness. See <http://www.epa.gov/smartgrowth/partnership/#livabilityprinciples>.

PRACTICES OF LEADING COMMUNITIES

While many local governments across the nation have developed effective approaches to enhancing their sustainability, standard bearers in developing comprehensive sustainability programs have been identified through the ICMA Sustainability Survey, studies, and recognition by other sustainability-related programs. Websites and studies of these leading practice communities were reviewed to identify key features of their efforts to incorporate equity in their sustainability programs. Several practices of leading communities stood out. These characteristics contribute an understanding of what is possible with regard to including social equity in a sustainability program.

First, social equity is an integral component of their overall sustainability plans. It is *defined*, and *related goals are clearly articulated* with corresponding *measurable objectives*. The Portland Plan, for example, includes a series of “we will” statements to clearly articulate goals in an actionable manner, and it explicitly states its commitment to social equity:

Advancing equity must be at the core of our plans for the future. . . Portland’s diverse communities have not had, and many still do not all have, equitable access to opportunities to advance their well-being and achieve their full potential. Greater equity in the city as a whole is essential to our long-term success. Equity is both a means to a healthy, resilient community and an end from which we all benefit (The Portland Plan 2012, 4).

Over the next 25 years, Portland, Oregon, seeks to be “prosperous, educated, healthy and equitable” (4). The actions covered in the Portland Plan include expanding the economy, adding more jobs, and creating a cleaner and greener built and natural environment and these are defined in ways that stress inclusiveness and sharing the benefits with all residents. All the other proposed actions in the Portland program focus on social conditions and opportunities that will, in turn, enhance economic success and environmental protection:

- Create housing and neighborhoods that are affordable for more Portlanders.
- Reduce disparities in health, income and education.
- Improve graduation rates and get people ready for jobs.
- Improve the health of kids, adults and families
- Increase our sense of safety and overall well-being.
- Promote greater access to complete, walkable neighborhoods—with healthy food, parks, shops, transportation options, and other amenities.¹¹

Boulder, Colorado, defines social equity in its *Social Sustainability Plan*: “Social equity is . . . participatory governance; deliberate and inclusionary processes; considering the needs of all

¹¹ “The Portland Plan is a strategic plan with equity at its core.” In fact, Portland uses a Venn diagram approach to identify three strategies to promote the core commitment to equity that is in turn essential to the overall sustainability plan. See The Portland Plan (2012). Statement and list of actions can be viewed in the Portland Plan information document, accessible at <http://www.portlandonline.com/portlandplan/index.cfm?a=405754&c=58776>.

members of the community, including those most vulnerable” (City of Boulder 2007, 10). Boulder lists goals for achieving social equity along with subsequent action items. These action items are assigned to a particular department for responsibility, and the status of the item is available for the community to review. Other communities that have social equity integrated into their overall sustainability plans include Grand Rapids, Michigan, and Santa Monica, California. Grand Rapids’ plan lists overall goals in education, health, safety, and access to community resources, and dates by which each target should be achieved.¹² Santa Monica discusses equity items—including transportation, human dignity, civic participation, and education—separately in its sustainability plan, without reference to the traditional components of environment, economy, and equity. Within each goal, however, there is discussion of environmental, economic, and equity issues.¹³ This approach holistically addresses sustainability in a unique way.

Second, social equity is integrated into the sustainability plan through an *inclusive process* that *invites input from a wide variety of community members*, including residents, nonprofits, and business partners. Inclusivity in the planning process encourages buy-in to a co-created social equity vision. The plan is not imposed from the top down but is rather collaborative in creation, implementation, and evaluation. This inclusivity is particularly evident in plans developed by Portland and Boulder. *Appropriate stakeholders for marginalized groups are engaged*, especially as specific plans are developed to address their needs. For example, disability advocacy groups should be included when discussing equity for the disabled, and senior advocacy groups should be included when discussing equity for seniors. The saying “nothing about me without me” prevails.

Third, *leading communities collaborate* with local nonprofits, universities, private sector partners, and other local governments *to achieve common goals*. This is accomplished by leveraging common resources and improving coordination for greater effectiveness while streamlining efforts for greater efficiency. For example, Boulder collaborates with Boulder County on the implementation of a shared vision articulated in the Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan. In Portland, there is a Portland–Multnomah County partnership that allows for regional coordination toward sustainability goals. Portland also coordinates sustainability efforts with a dense network of local nonprofits. Santa Monica specifically identifies the importance of regional decisionmaking in sustainability efforts and notes that sustainability efforts in the city are embedded in a broader context.

Fourth, equity goals *specifically address the needs of marginalized members* of the community. Planning scenarios facilitate decisionmaking practices such that the ramifications of specific choices can be thoughtfully considered ahead of policy development and implementation. There is recognition that climate change will cause uneven costs as it creates more burdens for vulnerable residents. Portland’s plan is particularly exemplary, as it includes three critical components:

¹² For more information, see the City of Grand Rapids Sustainability Plan (June 11, 2012) at <http://grcity.us/enterprise-services/officeofenergyandsustainability/Documents/Sust%20Plan%20as%20amended%206-21-11.pdf>.

¹³ For more information, see the City of Santa Monica’s Sustainable City Plan (October 24, 2006) at <http://www.smgov.net/uploadedFiles/Departments/OSE/Categories/Sustainability/Sustainable-City-Plan.pdf>.

1. Efforts are made to ensure equal access to the benefit of sustainability projects for all groups through job training to facilitate entry into the green job market; energy audits, rebates, and subsidies; efforts to address the needs of seniors, disabled residents, and low- to moderate-income community members; and the provision of housing, transportation, energy, community safety, and access to health services, education, and community amenities.
2. No groups suffer disproportionately from other negative environmental conditions or hazards.
- 3 All groups have equal access to the benefits of sustainability programs and services, and an equal opportunity to develop and prosper in the community.

Fifth, among leading cities, performance indicators are made available so there is clear evidence as to whether social equity objectives are being achieved. Performance indicators are outcome based, and leading cities provide information in an accessible and user-friendly format to ensure transparency and accountability. Minneapolis, Minnesota, offers a user-friendly site (updated with extensive information in 2012) that lists extensive indicators for its sustainability plan. This includes a number of areas of particular interest for social equity, including crime, employment, poverty, homelessness, graduation rate, and civic engagement. Methodologies for each area are clearly explained, and a narrative describing the indicators is made available.¹⁴ The Portland Plan includes measures of success in twelve core areas for which data are provided. These include income distribution, a diversity index, resident satisfaction, graduation rates, economic self-sufficiency, exports as a business indicator, job growth, transit and active transportation, carbon emissions, an index measuring complete neighborhoods, healthy weight of residents, community safety, and healthy watersheds. This comprehensive approach treats social equity as an overarching goal, embedded in all city policies and activities (Portland Plan 2012, 105–39). Cleveland, Ohio, offers an interactive dashboard specifying goals and priority areas as well as any available indicators to demonstrate whether the city is meeting its target. The dashboard integrates information from a number of city agencies in a user-friendly format.¹⁵

¹⁴ For a full list of Minneapolis sustainability indicators and numerical targets, see <http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/www/groups/public/@citycoordinator/documents/images/wcms1p-093724.pdf> (updated January 27, 2012).

¹⁵ View the website at <http://www.sustainablecleveland.org/about/dashboard/>.

METHODOLOGY

This study builds on a national survey conducted by ICMA in 2010 to learn about local government sustainability activities, and a follow-up survey to selected governments in 2012 that focused on social equity activities. The initial survey provides insights about the extent of social equity activity as part of local governments' overall sustainability programs. The follow-up survey examined the breadth and depth of social equity activities by governments that have a high overall sustainability commitment. The features of sustainability programs in those governments recognized as leaders in comprehensive approaches were assessed. Using those features as a guide, the study selected nine local governments active in social equity to be case studies. The results of each component of the research are described separately.

SUMMARY OF SURVEY RESULTS

2010 ICMA Sustainability Survey

A national survey was conducted in summer 2010 of 8,569 local governments with populations over 2,500 examining what they were doing to promote sustainability (Svara 2011). There was a 25% response rate with 2,176 local governments responding. The survey contained 109 questions about sustainability activities in 12 major categories: recycling, water conservation, transportation improvements, energy use in transportation and lighting, social inclusion, building energy use, local production and green purchasing, land conservation and development rights, greenhouse gas reduction and air quality, building and land use regulations, workplace alternatives to reduce commuting, and alternative energy generation. The social inclusion category directly relates to social equity, and a few other specific activities in other categories are also relevant (see discussion below). The overall finding from this survey was that most local governments generally participate in long-standing activities such as recycling and in activities required by law, such as improving air and water quality; however, they are generally not taking advantage of most of the more innovative opportunities available to them, such as use of solar power, reclamation of grey water, and alternative work schedules for government employees (Svara 2011).

The triple bottom line, focusing on environmental, economic, and equity concerns, was measured with questions about the extent to which various policy issues are priorities in the community:

- Ninety-four percent of respondents said the “economy” is a very high or high priority.
- Sixty-two percent considered the “environment” a priority (70% of respondents called “energy conservation” a priority but only 19% assigned high priority status to “climate change”).
- Thirty-eight percent considered “social justice” to be a priority, although there was more widespread support for affordable housing (48%) as a policy priority.

The lower acceptance for some of these priorities reflects political connotations associated with them—in particular, “climate change” and “social justice.” The follow-up survey offered a wider range of priorities. Still, for most survey respondents, the triple bottom line was not addressed in an even manner, and a clear hierarchy in priorities emerged. The economy is by far the highest priority for local governments.

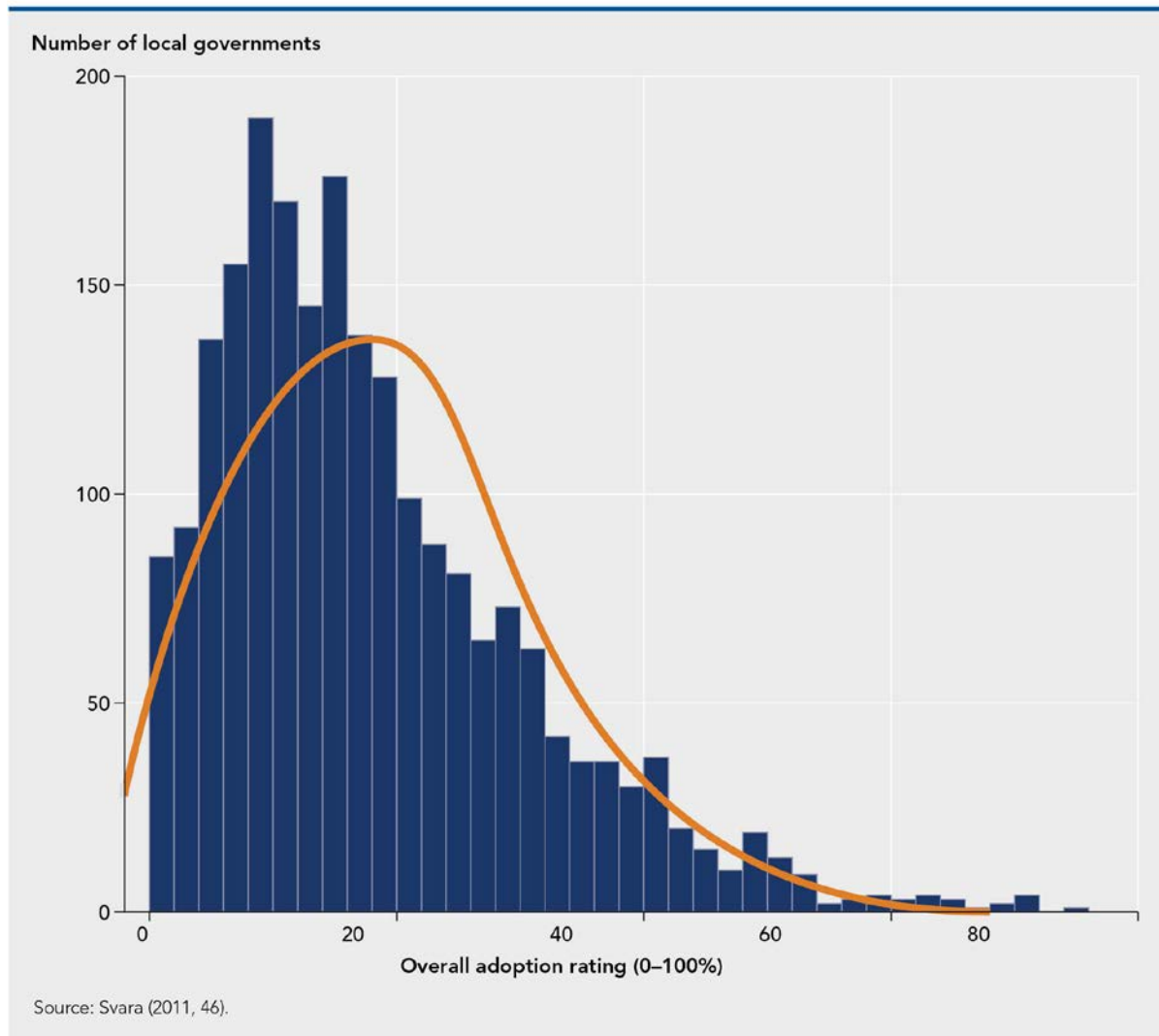
Of the most common activities local governments engage in, only one—affordable housing—is directly related to social equity even though some of these activities have benefits that extend to all, including the disadvantaged. The practices adopted by 30% or more of the responding governments are the following:

- Seventy-five percent have community-wide recycling, internal recycling (72%), or recycling of household hazardous waste (55%) or electronic equipment (52%).
- A strong majority (63%) of localities had conducted energy audits of government buildings (56%) and upgraded HVAC systems (39%).

- Sixty-one percent had added biking and walking trails or dedicated bike lanes on streets (34%).
- Fifty-four percent require sidewalks in new developments.
- Fifty-two percent support farmers markets.
- Forty-five percent plan for tree preservation and planting.
- Forty-four percent purchase energy-efficient vehicles.
- Thirty-seven percent increased efficiency of traffic signals and added efficiency streetlights and other exterior lighting (31%).
- Thirty-five percent have zoning codes to encourage more mixed-use development.
- Thirty-four percent had acted to conserve the quantity of water from aquifers, use water pricing to encourage conservation (33%), and set limits on impervious surfaces (30%).
- Thirty-three percent provide financial support or incentives for affordable housing.

The average adoption rate for seven items in the social inclusion category was 21%.

Figure 1 Distribution of Sustainability Ratings



Regarding adoption of the full range of sustainability activities, some local governments are pursuing sustainability-related goals to an exceptional degree, but overall local governments are using an average of only 18% of the surveyed sustainability activities. The pattern of adoption for most innovations reflects a “normal” distribution, with a majority of governments in the middle with moderate rates of adoption and smaller numbers at the leading and trailing edges of adoption in a bell-shaped curve (Nelson and Svava 2011). For sustainability activities, however, the distribution of ratings (the percentage of total sustainability practices adopted) is skewed toward the low end of the scale, as shown in Figure 1. Most governments are below the average rating.

The 2010 survey results indicate that there is potential for a substantial increase in sustainability activity if most governments were to “catch up” and move toward the middle of the distribution.

There are a number of factors related to the level of total sustainability adoptions. Local governments that use the council-manager form of government and are located in Western states have higher ratings, and the adoption rate increases with higher population (Svava, Watt, and Jang 2013). Significant but weaker relationships are found with a younger population, higher education level, lower income, and higher housing value, and sustainability ratings increase as the white population percentage increases. Demographic and socioeconomic status characteristics make a difference, but not a substantial one when examining the overall level of sustainability activity undertaken by local governments.

Additional analysis has been conducted on an expanded social equity index drawn from the 2010 survey using the seven items in the social inclusion category plus three additional activities related to transportation and subsidies for residential energy conservation included in other categories. The activities and the percentage of governments adopting each are listed in Table 1.

The average number of these activities adopted by the responding government in 2010 is 2 out of 10, although there is variation based on the characteristics of the local government. When the distribution of local

Table 1 Activities that Promote Social Equity

Activities	% Adopting
Financial support/incentives for affordable housing *	33%
Provide access to information technology for persons without connection*	27%
Provide housing options for the elderly*	27%
Provide after-school programs for children*	26%
Expand bus routes	22%
Transportation programs targeted specifically to assist low-income residents	21%
Provide supportive housing to people with disabilities*	15%
Provide funding for pre-school education*	12%
Provide housing within your community to homeless persons*	10%
Energy reduction programs targeted specifically to assist low-income residents	8%
Mean number of 10 activities	2

*Items in original Social Inclusion category.

governments is arranged by the number of social equity activities adopted, the pattern is similar to Figure 1, but even more skewed toward the low end.

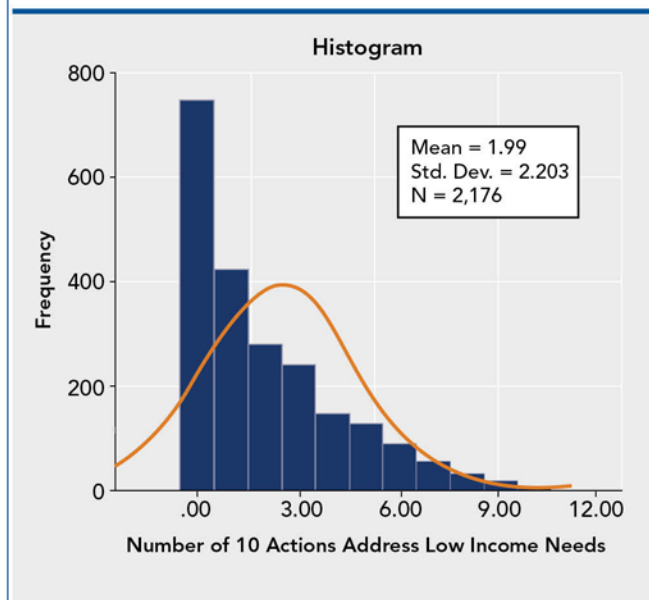
Over one-third of these local governments are not providing any of the programs that address social equity concerns of unequal access or opportunity.

The factors related to the social equity index score for all responding governments are similar to those for sustainability ratings generally. Council-manager form of government, Western states, higher population, and more educated population are positively related to social equity adoptions and negatively

related to population age and income level. Race and ethnicity are not related to social equity level for all governments. The results indicate that certain governments are “predisposed” to include social equity in their sustainability programs. In communities that do not have these characteristics, proponents of social equity need to present the issue of equity in such a way as to increase the likelihood of building support.¹⁶ As discussed later in the report, there are alternative ways of describing how equity relates to sustainability; and one approach may be received more favorably than another.

There is a strong correlation across all sustainability activities, so governments that do more for social equity are likely to be more active in terms of general sustainability. As noted, the factors related to higher ratings on both the overall sustainability and the social equity scales are similar. Additional analysis of the 2010 survey results was conducted to compare governments that had high ratings on sustainability but low scores of social equity. The governments assigned to the “high-equity” group of governments were engaged in at least 6 of the 10 activities in Table 1 and totaled 200 governments, or 9.2%, of the responding governments. On the other hand, among governments with high scores on the overall sustainability ratings (in the upper 30th percentile of ratings), there were 227 governments with 2 equity actions or less. They were assigned to the “low-equity” group even though they are active in other areas of sustainability. Most of the higher sustainability/lower equity governments are cities (94%) with populations of under 50,000 (76%). To match the high-equity governments, a comparison group of 100 governments was selected.¹⁷ The

Figure 2 Level of Social Equity Action



¹⁶ Finding appropriate ways to frame the issue is important in all communities. For example, the advantage of promoting equity in a larger council-manager city in the West is that there are more examples of other comparable cities that have already incorporated social equity in their sustainability programs than in governments with the different characteristics. Still, finding the right way to promote the theme will be important to success.

¹⁷ The governments selected were all 55 governments over 50,000 in population and 45 governments chosen randomly from governments under 50,000 in population. For the comparison group, it was important not to be comparing primarily small low-equity governments with larger high-equity governments.

two groups are similar in the actions they have adopted outside of equity areas. The high-equity group has adopted an average of 37 activities, while the low-equity group has adopted 34 activities.

It is important to know how the two groups compare in their characteristics. Do dramatically different types of governments take different paths when it comes to adopting measures to promote social equity? The analysis of differences used the same characteristics noted earlier. There are two sets of factors, which lead to different expectations about which governments would be high and which would be low on equity. It might be expected from other research on policy choices that governments with higher minority populations and lower levels of socioeconomic status would be more likely to adopt equity measures. On the other hand, higher income and more educated communities with more young adults would be more likely to be innovative and take on new responsibilities. The results are presented in Table 2. As expected, the high-equity governments have higher minority populations and lower levels of education and income. The differences in housing value and percentage of young residents are not significant.

Table 2 Comparison of Local Governments with High Social Equity Activity

Comparison Groups of Governments		Black	Hispanic	Foreign born	Bachelors degree	Home owner	Poverty	Age 25 to 44 Years Percent	Median housing value
Low equity; High other areas of sustainability	Mean	8.87%	13.95%	11.11%	35.10	65.65	11.75%	26.61%	\$28,7253.61
	N	91	91	91	90	90	91	83	84
High-equity; high other areas of sustainability	Mean	12.01%	17.81%	13.68%	29.31	60.31	17.02%	26.95%	\$272,117.16
	N	178	178	178	178	177	178	139	140
Total	Mean	10.95%	16.50%	12.81%	31.26	62.11	15.24%	26.82%	\$277,793.33
	N	269	269	269	268	267	269	222	224
ANOVA significance		0.080	0.083	0.060	0.003	0.001	0.006	.552	.607

Still, the differences in demographic and socioeconomic measures are modest. Although they have less potential social need than the high-equity governments, the low-equity governments still have 23% black and Hispanic population and 12% in poverty. Thus the low-equity governments have needs that are not being addressed to the extent that they are in the other cities. These governments are also smaller—with an average population of 106,510 compared to 201,307 in high-equity governments—in part because they include fewer counties that tend to have higher populations. When comparing the median populations for the two types of governments, the differences are small.

In other words, half of the low-equity cities are under 46,483, and half of the high-equity cities are under 47,796 in population. The low-equity counties have higher mean and median populations. Thus the data from the 2010 survey do not support the simplistic conclusion that high-equity governments are large and have high levels of social and economic need whereas low-equity governments (that are active in other areas of sustainability) are small, affluent, and homogenous. The high-equity communities have found ways to solidify support for social equity that are missing in the marginally, yet significantly different low-equity communities. Additional information was needed to measure the full scope of social equity activities in these two types of governments and the factors that support the stronger commitment to equity.

Table 3 Population Comparison

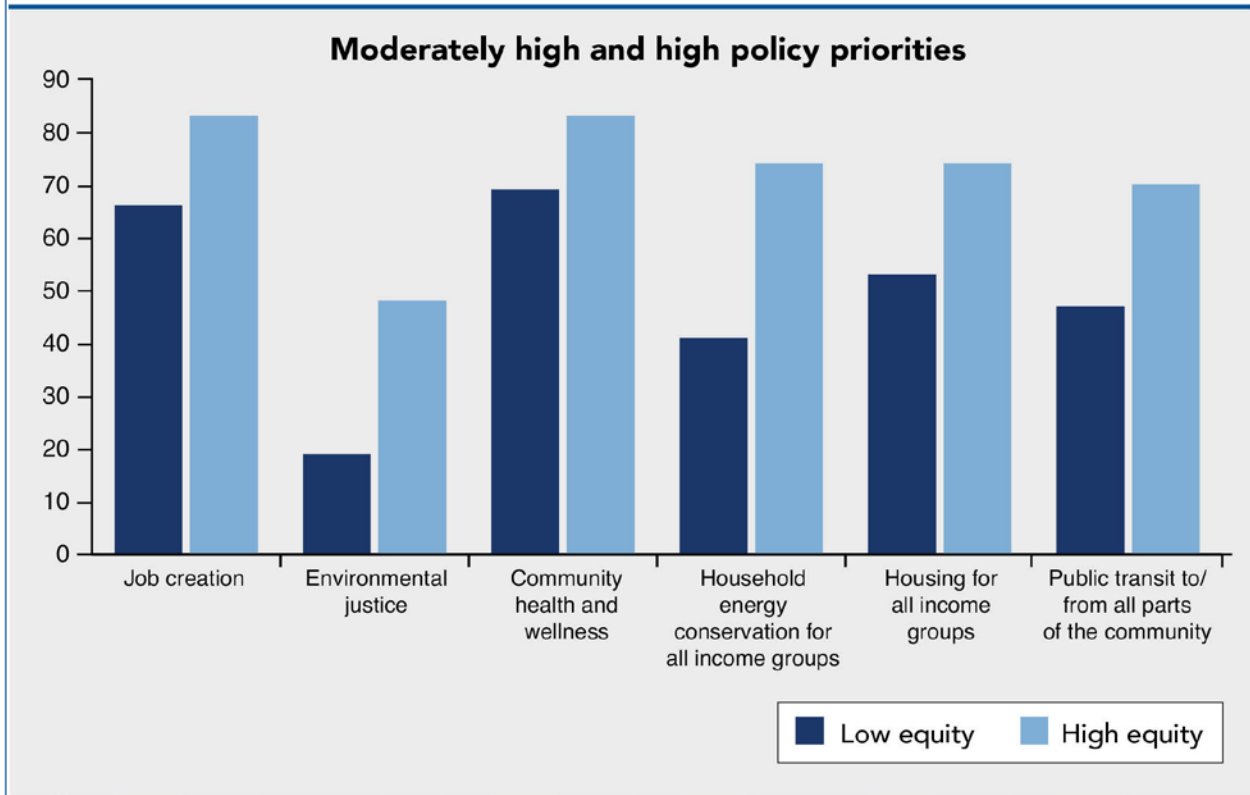
		Mean	Median
Low equity; high in other areas of sustainability	City 87% (87)	67,460	46,483
	County 13% (13)	367,849	264,063
	Total	106,510	53,429
High-equity; high in other areas of sustainability	City 78% (156)	165,266	47,796
	County 22% (44)	329,090	227,384
	Total	201,307	61,766

2012 Social Equity Survey

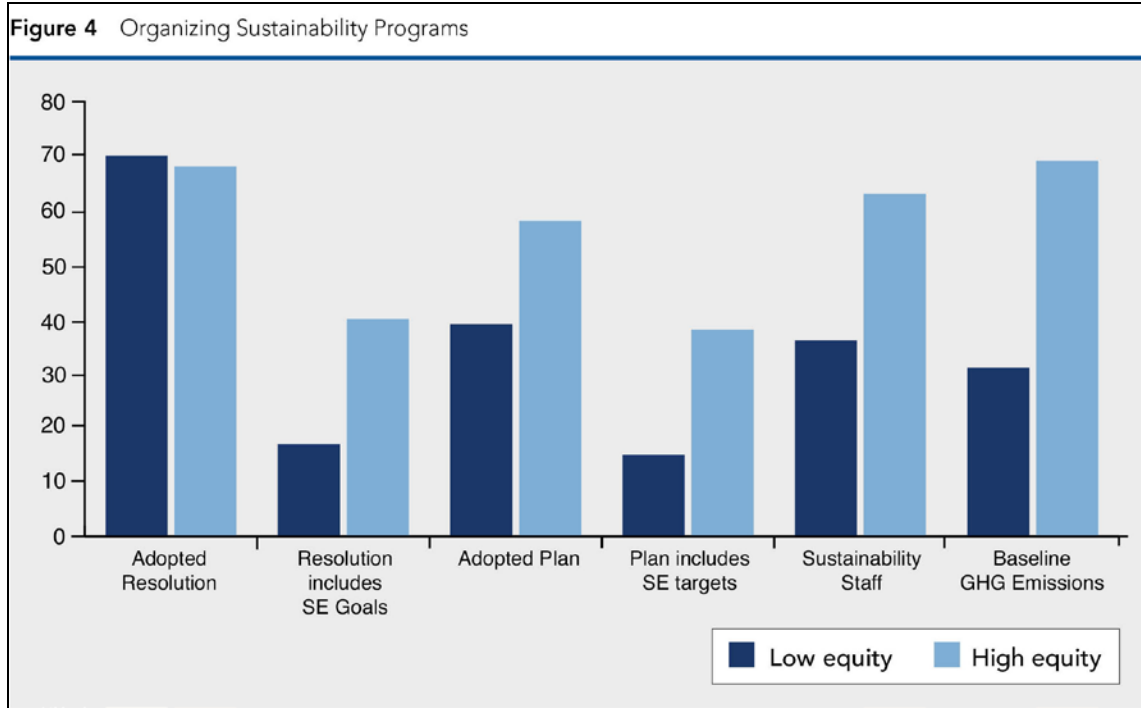
In 2012, a follow-up survey was sent to the 200 local governments that were found to be highly active in social equity in the first survey, as well as to a control group of 100 local governments that were identified as highly active in sustainability but that reported less activity in social equity. The purpose of the survey was to delve more deeply into the range of social equity-related activities that the two groups of local governments had adopted and examine how the two groups compare in policy priorities and approaches to organizing their sustainability programs. The response rate was 34% for both groups (68 respondents from the high-equity local governments and 34 respondents from the control group). Overall, in each section of the survey, the high-equity respondents showed higher percentages reporting a wider range of equity-related activities than did the low-equity respondents. In many instances, the differences were pronounced.

The two groups of governments had different policy priorities. As indicated in Figure 3, there are similarities and striking differences in the percentages of each group that assign a high level of priority to the issues presented. As in the first survey, the high-equity governments are much more likely to place a high priority on environmental justice than are the low-equity governments. Still, even in the high-equity governments, fewer than half consider this to be a high-priority issue. There is also a big gap in the support given to household energy conservation for all income groups and to public transit to and from all parts of the community. For these issues, however, a substantial minority of low-equity governments do consider them to be important. For the issues of job creation and community health and wellness, there is little difference in the likelihood that these issues will be assigned a high priority. Thus there is a possibility that support for equity activities can be mobilized around issues that command broader support—job creation and community health, as well as housing and public transit for all.

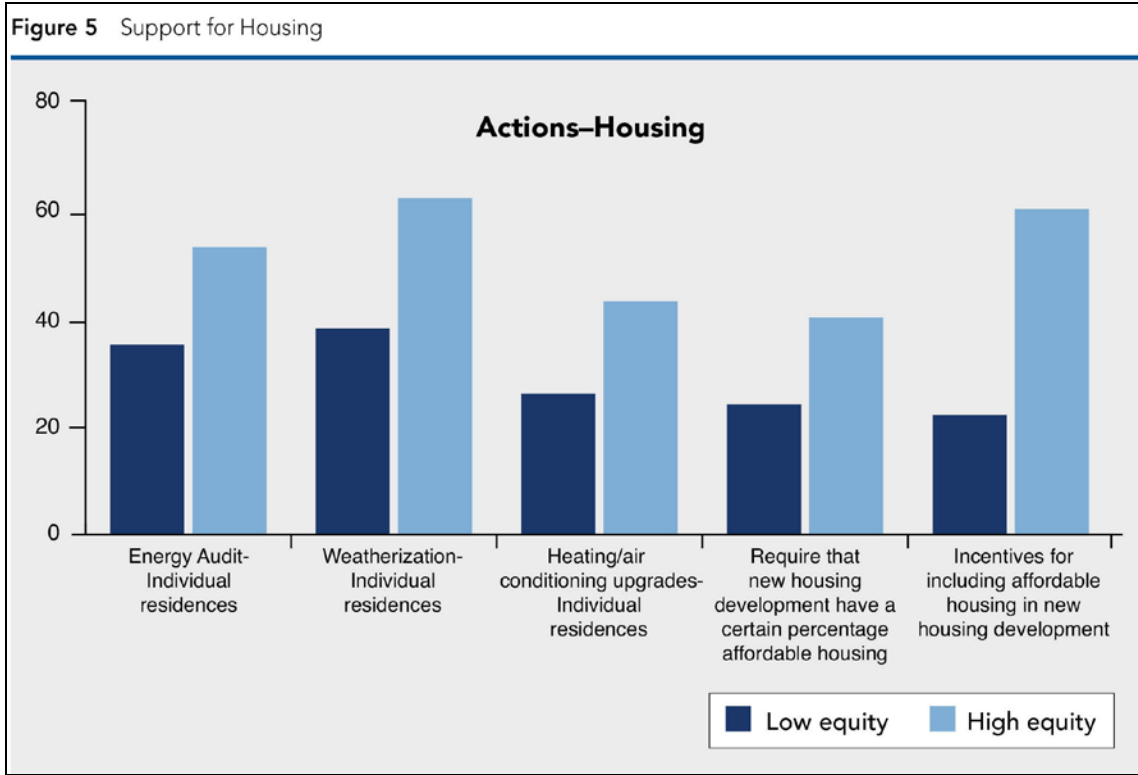
Figure 3 Priority Assessment



In high- and low-equity governments, approaches to organizing sustainability programs are virtually identical with regard to having a resolution to convey support for sustainability, as seen in Figure 4. Approximately two-thirds of governments in both groups have such a resolution, although the high-equity governments are more likely to include social equity goals in the resolution. On the other measures of how the program is organized, however, there are substantial differences even if equity is not directly involved. High-equity governments are more likely to (1) have developed a plan that clearly articulates social equity goals, (2) commit adequate resources to implementing the plan, and (3) assign staff to administer it. They are also more than twice as likely to have determined baseline greenhouse gas emissions. Thus the governments active in equity commit more resources to sustainability and pursue a broader strategy that includes greenhouse gas emissions. On the other hand, only two in five high-equity governments have explicit social equity goals and targets. While these governments have extensive activities related to social equity, most have not articulated social equity goals within their sustainability plans. This lack of comprehensive integration is examined further in the case studies.



Actions to reduce housing costs and expand housing options are an important element in social equity. Providing residential energy audits, weatherization to reduce energy use, and upgrades of residential heating and air conditioning systems reduce greenhouse gases and save money for occupants. All three practices are more prevalent in high-equity communities, with weatherization assistance offered in over three-fifths of these governments, as shown in Figure 5. Sixty percent of high-equity governments provide incentives to encourage construction of affordable housing compared to 22% of low-equity governments. Requiring that new housing complexes have affordable units is almost twice as common in high-equity governments—but still only 40% of those governments have this kind of inclusionary zoning requirement.



Differences are not as pronounced in programs that focus on residential energy use. Over 3 in 10 low-equity governments conduct energy audits and support weatherization in individual residences. A wide range of services and facilities can be specialized to assist low-income residents. As shown in Table 4, all the services are more commonly provided in high-equity local governments, over half of which provide facilities to receive social services, transportation to service locations, libraries, security programs (including community watch and community policing), efforts to reduce blight, and space for community gardens. Over 40% offer community wellness programs, farmer’s markets, and facilities to receive medical services. The most commonly provided service in low-equity communities is community policing, which is found in 47% of these governments.

Table 4 Local government actions targeted to low-income populations

Action/Program	EQUITY LEVEL	Local government has taken action in low-income neighborhoods (%)
Community wellness programs	LO	15
	HI	41
Provide facilities to receive social services	LO	18
	HI	56
Provide transportation from neighborhood to receive social services	LO	29
	HI	57
Provide facilities to receive medical services	LO	9
	HI	47
Library located in neighborhood open during normal work hours	LO	32
	HI	62
Library located in neighborhood open in the evenings after normal work hours	LO	29
	HI	58
Efforts to promote security such as community watch	LO	34
	HI	60
Programs to reduce blight and graffiti	LO	26
	HI	62
Linkages between neighborhood residents and law enforcement such as community policing	LO	47
	HI	65
Provided space and supported the development of community gardens	LO	32
	HI	59
Provided space for farmers markets	LO	24
	HI	47
An active brownfields, vacant property, or other program for revitalizing abandoned or underutilized residential, commercial or industrial lands and buildings	LO	15
	HI	31
Other actions to rectify toxic air, water, or land pollution	LO	3
	HI	21
A land conservation program	LO	3
		29

Actions to expand job opportunities are also offered more commonly in high-equity communities. Almost all high-equity communities take actions to promote job creation, and this is found in 62% of the low-equity communities as well. Still, the high-equity communities are almost twice as likely to

develop “green jobs” as well as offer training and development programs to prepare for these jobs. Requirements for contractors to pay a living wage are used in fewer than half of the high-equity jurisdictions (38%), and these jurisdictions rarely require that health insurance be provided (5%).

Table 5 Local government actions to create jobs

Action/Program	EQUITY LEVEL	Yes (%)	No (%)	Don't Know (%)
Actions to promote job creation	LO	62	38	0
	HI	88	11	2
- If yes, have actions included development of “green jobs” (Note: These percentages are based on the number that answered “yes” in “a” above.)	LO	33	52	14
	HI	64	27	9
Training and workforce development	LO	42	58	0
	HI	72	23	5
- If yes, have actions included preparation for filling “green jobs” (Note: These percentages are based on the number that answered “yes” in “b” above.)	LO	36	50	14
	HI	61	30	9
Requirement that contractors with your local government provide a living wage for employees	LO	9	82	9
	HI	38	53	10
Requirement that contractors with your local government provide health insurance for employees	LO	3	87	10
	HI	5	81	14

A number of dimensions affect the extent to which individuals and groups are connected to the life of the community and are capable of being fully involved in political, social, and economic activities. Technology is increasingly becoming the channel for communication, but some residents are excluded from full participation by a digital divide caused by lack of knowledge or resources to access the internet. Most high-equity communities and more than half of low-equity communities are offering services and facilities to provide training to expand technology skills and access to information technology, as shown in Table 6. Financial subsidies, however, are less common in both groups of governments. Community centers that offer educational and recreational programs and after-school programs are provided in all communities surveyed, but they are more common in high-equity communities. There is wide divergence in the extent to which pre-school is provided (78% of high-equity compared to 29% of low-equity). Half of the high-equity and one-third of the low-equity communities offer opportunities to learn about organic farming.¹⁸ Finally, most of the

¹⁸ As reported in Table 4, 59% of the high-equity governments provided space for community gardens compared with 32% of the low-equity governments. Urban farming has been an important element in the revitalization plans of jurisdictions that have experienced population declines, such as Detroit and Cleveland.

high-equity communities report to the public on quality-of-life indicators in the community compared to fewer than half of the low-equity communities.

Table 6 Local Government actions to promote social equity

Action/Program	EQUITY LEVEL	% with program
Provide access to information technology for people without connection to the internet	LO	59%
	HI	82%
Provide training for community members interested in improving their technology skills	LO	53%
	HI	76%
Provide assistance in accessing subsidies that may be available for low-income members of the community to obtain Internet access in their homes	LO	26%
	HI	40%
Community center for educational and recreational purposes	LO	71%
	HI	93%
Provide funding for pre-school education	LO	29%
	HI	78%
Provide after-school programs for children	LO	59%
	HI	87%
Provide education on organic farming	LO	32%
	HI	50%
Report on community quality of life indicators, such as education, cultural, diversity, and social well-being.	LO	44%
	HI	71%

The 2012 follow-up survey results indicate that there are two overlapping groups of local governments that approach social equity with different degrees of commitment despite that fact that both groups have active sustainability programs in areas other than social equity. The two groups were classified on the basis of their responses to the 2010 national survey, and their programs could have changed in the interval before the follow-up survey. The two groups are not complete opposites in their approaches. As the discussion of survey results indicates, some of the communities identified as high-equity are not providing certain specific programs and services related specifically to social equity, whereas some communities in the low-equity group are doing so. More needs to be done to increase activities even in communities receptive to promoting social equity; these communities can expand and deepen their efforts.

Many communities in the low-equity group offer a number of programs that are related to equity, and as members of this group are active in sustainability, they have a foundation on which to build. In addition, as noted at the beginning of the discussion of the 2012 survey, sizable minorities of these communities give a high priority to job creation and health and wellness. These policy areas could provide the policy foundation for expanded equity activity. A comparison of the two groups'

median housing values and percentages of population in poverty presented in Table 2 suggests that the low-equity governments presumably have higher resources and lower social needs. While the high-equity group has more large cities and more counties, both of which have access to a wider range of resources, the median populations for both groups are similar. As the case studies indicate, local governments with extensive activities in social equity have a strong commitment to addressing the needs and expanding the opportunities of vulnerable populations, and they are adept at involving residents and community organizations in their programs.

Case Studies in Local Government Social Equity Initiatives

Criteria for Section

Case studies were conducted in nine communities identified from the 2012 social equity follow-up survey. These communities were considered to be highly active in social equity for the purpose of gaining insight as to how to strengthen the equity dimension of sustainability.¹⁹ In selecting communities for case study, there were three major criteria: (1) a high level of social equity activities, (2) evidence that some practices of leading communities were being used, and (3) a diverse array of small to moderately large cities and counties would be included. Out of sixty items in the follow-up survey that governments might include in their sustainability programs, the nine case study communities reported that they provided from 37 to 54 of them. Websites of possible case study sites were reviewed to determine whether elements identified in the review of leading sustainability governments were present. The sites selected, however, reflected different approaches to organizing the sustainability program, planning, and incorporating social equity. One objective of the case studies was to assess whether these differences have any impact on the coherence and operation of the sustainability program and the commitment to social equity. Efforts were made to select a variety of sites from across regions of the country and population size. The nine case study locations are listed in Table 7, which reveals the variations that exist between the local governments studied. Included are cities, counties, and a combination of the two from states in the Northeast, Midwest, South, Mountain, and West Coast regions. They range in population from 36,592 to 425,363 and differ in their poverty rates and the racial diversity of their populations.

Table 7. Comparison of Case Study Communities

	Population	% Poverty	% White
Cities			
Dubuque, IA	57,637	11.8	90.2
Fort Collins, CO	143,986	17.2	89.0
Hayward, CA	144,186	12.8	34.2
Lewiston, ME	36,592	20.5	86.6
Combined City/County Program			
Ann Arbor/Washtenaw County, MI	113,934/347,962	21.5	73.0
Arlington, VA*	207,627	7.1	77.3
Durham/Durham County, NC	228,330/267,587	18.6	42.5
Counties			
Clark County, WA	425,363	11.7	88.1
Manatee County, FL	322,833	13.6	86.8

*Arlington is a county government that provides the full range of city services. There are no municipalities in the county.

¹⁹ No case studies on social equity were conducted after the 2010 survey.

The case studies examine the actions that have been taken by the local government(s) and timeline in which they were developed. In addition, the researchers seek to determine the purpose of the activities, the dynamics of the program, how the separate parts fit together, who contributes to the activities, what they have accomplished, and how the overall purpose of the program and the social equity component are defined and justified.

Profiles of Case Study Jurisdictions

DUBUQUE, IOWA: Branded for Sustainability Success

The city of Dubuque, Iowa was officially chartered in 1837 as a municipality along the Mississippi River. Throughout its history, Dubuque leveraged access to the river as mining, agriculture, and manufacturing helped to create the “masterpiece on the Mississippi.” This masterpiece started to unravel in the 1980s as major employers in farm equipment manufacturing, food processing, and other industries shuttered their doors, setting in motion a rapid rise in unemployment to almost 23% in 1982 and resulting in an exodus of residents looking for a new start and greener economic pastures.

After several years of decline, leadership from the public and private sector began the visioning and planning process that would eventually transform the city of Dubuque into the show case of a sustainable community that it is now perceived to be by a worldwide

network of admirers and emulators. The “Sustainable Dubuque” brand is an organizing theme, vision, and management principle for achieving social equity and community goals that tie efforts in citizen engagement, effective partnerships, and other activities together. The vision statement is the following:

Our mission is to make Dubuque a viable, livable, and equitable community, embrace economic prosperity, social/cultural vibrancy and environmental integrity to create sustainable legacy for generations to come.

Thus the city “focuses on a balanced approach to life quality” and includes “economic prosperity, environmental integrity, and social/cultural vibrancy.”²⁰

Major Social Equity Initiatives

Meaningful Citizen Engagement. Through initiatives like the city’s Vision 2000 planning process, which sought the input of nearly 5,000 residents, and “Sustainable Dubuque” and “Dubuque 2.0” grassroots and civic engagement efforts, the city has effectively engaged citizens and stakeholders to identify local priority objectives and goals. The most recent large-scale citizen engagement effort,

Dubuque At-A-Glance



POPULATION (2010): 57,637
SQUARE MILES (2010): 26.5
POVERTY RATE: 11.8%
ANNUAL BUDGET (FY2013 OPERATING): \$108,848,274

SUSTAINABILITY PLANS AND STRATEGIES:
Sustainable Dubuque, March, 2012 (Summary, 24 pgs.)

MAJOR COMPONENTS OF SUSTAINABILITY PLANS:
Green Building, Healthy Local Food, Community Knowledge, Reasonable Mobility; Healthy Air, Clean Water, Native Plants & Animals; Community Design, Smart Energy Use, Resources Management, Regional Economy

MAJOR SOCIAL EQUITY ACTIVITIES IN COMMUNITY:
Strategic sustainability planning, citizen engagement, sustainable development, education, workforce development.

²⁰ http://www.sustainabledubuque.org/en/about_us/about_sustainable_dubuque/

Envision 2010, was the 2005 collaboration between the Community Foundation of Greater Dubuque and the Dubuque Chamber of Commerce that leveraged the creativity of nearly 13,000 residents to generate ideas for creating greater social and community vibrancy. Examples of these ideas included an expansion of an entertainment campus located on the Mississippi River, community-wide wireless Internet, and the development of a passenger train service. In 2012, Dubuque created a community engagement coordinator staff position to support citizen engagement efforts and develop a new community engagement plan.

Strategic Partnerships through Smarter Sustainability Dubuque and with the Community Foundation of Greater Dubuque.

Dubuque has demonstrated great commitment and success in partnering with local organizations, both public and private, over the past twenty years. One that has gained international prestige is Dubuque's Smarter Sustainable Dubuque partnership with IBM. Using smarter metering technology in several areas, including water and electricity, projects of the partnership have operated with a commitment to all three legs of the "triple bottom-line" stool through programs that intentionally benefit residents in need. Another city partnership with the Community Foundation of Greater Dubuque has been critical in addressing issues in areas like workforce development, economic development, youth, education, and more.

Building a Better Future for Young People. The city and community of Dubuque have developed numerous programs and partnerships that are focused on the next generation many of which are supported by both the city and key institutional partners such as the Community Foundation of Greater Dubuque. Several of the existing programs include a campaign focused on improving grade level reading scores, often a predictor of future success in adulthood, and a program promoting effective, efficient collaboration among youth-serving agencies called Every Child Every Promise. Every Child Every Promise analyzed service gaps and overlaps for youth in Dubuque, developed a report, and used the report to develop and publish a Youth Indicators Report that established measures for five promise areas: Caring Adults, Safe Places, Opportunities to Serve, Healthy Starts, and Effective Education.

Improving Workforce Development and Economic Stability for the Most Vulnerable Populations. Dubuque made great strides to recover from staggering levels of 23% unemployment in the 1980s through implementation of numerous public-private efforts targeting low- and moderate-income families, under- and un-employed workers, and high school dropouts. One example is Project H.O.P.E (Helping Our People Excel), a program that engages eight local partnering groups from government agencies, the business community, education, and local philanthropy to improve the services and programming that is designed to support disenfranchised youth with education, skills training and employment opportunities.

Sustainable Growth Plans. To combat effects of the economic decline, over the last twenty years several sustainable growth plans have been created to help guide economic advancement, redevelopment and revitalization of key neighborhoods in Dubuque where public and private investments are being made. These include the Dubuque Comprehensive Plan, Downtown Master Plan, Port of Dubuque Master Plan, Washington Neighborhood Master Plan, and Historic Millwork

District Plan. These plans focus on lower income areas and neighborhoods with a significant number of warehouse buildings in various stages of abandonment and neglect.

Key Observations:

- The city’s brand—Sustainable Dubuque—provides an organizing theme, vision, and management principle for achieving social equity and community goals.
- Creating more sustainable communities for the next generation is critically important.
- Community sustainability is closely related to workforce development and economic stability among the most vulnerable populations.
- Community and social vibrancy in Dubuque proceeds in step with economic advancement and economic redevelopment that builds from the region’s past.

Further Resources:


- Comprehensive Plan (2008): Resident’s Guide.
www.cityofdubuque.org/DocumentCenter/Home/View/284
- Downtown Dubuque Master Plan.
www.cityofdubuque.org/DocumentCenter/Home/View/293
- Dubuque Historic Millwork District Master Plan (2009).
www.cityofdubuque.org/DocumentCenter/Home/View/1074

FORT COLLINS, COLORADO: An Integrated Approach to Sustainability

Located about an hour north of Denver, Colorado, Fort Collins is surrounded by 41 natural area sites purchased with citizen-initiated city and county sales taxes. The community has a long history of supporting an environmentally friendly way of life. In 1998, Fort Collins, Longmont, Loveland, and Estes Park all invested in Platt River Power Authority to become the first cities in Colorado to use wind power.

Fort Collins is home to Colorado State University. Fifty-two percent of the city’s nearly 150,000 residents have a bachelor’s degree or higher (compared to 36.7% in the state of Colorado), and over 95% of adults have earned a high school diploma. The presence of the university clearly impacts the diversity and reported incomes in the community. It also offers some unique opportunities for the city to collaborate with

Fort Collins At-A-Glance



POPULATION (2010): 144,186
SQUARE MILES (2010): 54.28
POVERTY RATE: 18.1%
ANNUAL BUDGET (FY2013): \$484.9 million
SUSTAINABILITY PLANS AND STRATEGIES:
City’s Action Plan for Sustainability (2004), City’s Environmental Policy (2009)
MAJOR SOCIAL EQUITY ACTIVITIES IN COMMUNITY:
Sustainability goals in Carbon, Electricity and Natural Gas, Fuel, Solid Waste Reduction, Education & Outreach, Funding, Parks & Natural Areas, Water, General Purchasing, Employee Safety & Health, and Local Food

researchers in a variety of fields. The downtown area is dotted with appealing local shops, restaurants, and public art. In the center of downtown, a bicycle library offers free bike checkouts for residents and visitors is maintained by a partnership between a local nonprofit called Bike Fort Collins (a local nonprofit), the City of Fort Collins, and several other private partners.

The vision for sustainability in Fort Collins is articulated through the triple bottom line (TBL): social sustainability, environmental sustainability, and economic sustainability. The City Council has provided funds for the upgrade and re-visioning of the Triple Bottom Line Analysis Map, a decisionmaking tool available to all city officials that combines qualitative and quantitative components to help them think through TBL dimensions of the decisions they make. Initially, the tool was primarily qualitative in nature. Further development seeks to refine the tool to facilitate evidence-based, data-driven approaches to public problems.

When Chief Sustainability Officer, Bruce Hendee, joined the city in 2011, he spent a year researching organizational strategies in local governments addressing sustainability in order to develop a sense of best practices and how they might be successfully applied in Fort Collins. In 2012, Fort Collins' city council approved an internal reorganization to create the Sustainability Service Division, headed by Hendee and comprised of three departments: Social Sustainability, Economic Health, and Environmental Services. While every department in the city pursues some sustainability objectives, the city's centralized office coordinates sustainability efforts in a unified, targeted, and specific manner.

Major Social Equity Initiatives

Resource Allocation to Social Sustainability. The social sustainability department provides one point of contact for efforts at addressing homelessness, affordable housing, transportation, diversity, and other social service issues. Developing opportunities for appropriate employment and health equity are also integrated into the goals of this service area. The department is responsible for coordinating \$2 million in annual grants, and its collaborative partnership with local nonprofits is very important to its success. Through this department, the city collaborates with organizations to address social issues and brings many partners to the table to leverage financial and organizational resources in support of achieving social goals.

Social Sustainability Gaps Analysis. As part of its social sustainability framework, the city recently contracted with consultants to complete a gaps analysis to identify actions to advance social equity that have been overlooked in the city and activities that might be addressed in a more effective and efficient manner to improve the quality of life for all community residents. One of the primary findings of the gaps analysis related to home affordability, and this has become the primary focus of the social sustainability department. In Fort Collins, the price of homes has increased by near 100% while incomes increased just over 56% during the same period. As part of a follow-up process, the social sustainability department is conducting a Housing Affordability Policy Study. The first stakeholder meeting was conducted on March 12, 2014.

Key Observations:

- Assigning responsibility for overall coordination of sustainability activities, as well as a department for social sustainability, signals clear commitment to developing all aspects of sustainability.
- Articulating comprehensive goals encourages all departments to think about the implications of specific projects for all aspects of sustainability.
- Beyond goal setting, committing the resources necessary to move that strategy forward is equally important.


Further Resources:

- Social Sustainability Gaps Analysis draft report (open during January 2014 for public comment). www.fcgov.com/socialsustainability/pdf/gapsdraftreport010814.pdf
- City of Fort Collins Action Plan for Sustainability (2004). www.fcgov.com/sustainability/pdf/sustainability-plan.pdf?1183060437
- City of Fort Collins Environmental Policy (2009). www.fcgov.com/sustainability/pdf/Signed-Environmental-Policy-City-of-Fort-Collins.pdf?1277760322
- Fort Collins' Performance Indicator Dashboard (includes general and detailed measurements). www.fcgov.com/performancemeasurement/

HAYWARD, CALIFORNIA: Using Libraries to Enhance Services

Located less than 30 minutes south of Oakland, California, Hayward is a diverse community in a state that is famous for taking a strong position in favor of environmental regulations to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. The city is uniquely situated where a significant portion of its area is below sea level. Council Member Al Mendall, past chair of the city's sustainability committee, noted that a disproportionate number of poor residents live in areas that are most likely to be impacted by sea-level rise. The city is the third most racially diverse in the entire state of California. The undocumented immigrant population is high, and Assistant City Manager Kelly McAdoo notes that at times this can significantly impact the city's ability to ensure that all residents have access to the services the city provides.

Hayward At-A-Glance



POPULATION (2010): 144,186
SQUARE MILES (2010): 45.32
POVERTY RATE: 12.8%
ANNUAL BUDGET (FY2013): \$ 239,923,000
SUSTAINABILITY PLANS AND STRATEGIES: Climate Action Plan completed in 2009. Issues addressed in the CAP will be incorporated into city's general plan in 2014.
MAJOR SOCIAL EQUITY ACTIVITIES IN COMMUNITY: Affordable Housing, Hayward Promise Neighborhood, Co-location of Library and Community Services, Regional Collaboration on Public Transportation

The census records the city's Hispanic population at over 40%. The Asian population is 20%, African American population 11.9%, and White population 34.2%. In 58% of the households, a language other than English is spoken in the home. Education attainment is a concern in the city; only 23.4% of the population has earned a bachelor's degree (compared to 30.5% of the state's population), and about 20% of the adult population has not earned a high school diploma.

Within the last few years, in part as a response to economic downturn, the city underwent a major internal reorganization. While Hayward had worked with a consultant group to develop a Climate Action Plan in 2009, a full-time environmental services manager with dedicated funding was named in March 2013 as a statement of the city's increasingly robust commitment to sustainability. Part of the public works department, environmental services has added energy efficiency and climate action to its existing foci of solid waste, recycling, and water conservation. The primary focus of the department is on GHG reduction. Erik Pearson, environmental services manager, notes a desire within the services area to engage low-income residents in order to ensure the benefits of sustainability are accessible to the community. While Hayward is engaging in a number of beneficial sustainability activities, they are not currently integrated under a holistic environment-equity-economy framework.

Major Social Equity Initiatives

Combining City Library and Community Services. As part of the city's reorganization, Sean Reinhart expanded his responsibilities and became director of Library and Community Services in Hayward. This position creatively connects two dimensions of the city to further objectives consistent with social equity. Volunteers connect with the diverse community through things like library-based literacy and language assistance programs. Community Development Block Grant monies are managed through Community Services.²¹ Reinhart seeks to expand the city library facilities, possibly co-locating them with local schools such that they can be available to community residents and students at the same time. Combining these two departments may result in a broadened perspective in how to best meet the needs of vulnerable members of the community. This reorganization is relatively new, so an evaluation of the efficacy of the combined department is difficult, but there are a number of potential benefits that may emerge from merging these offices.

Hayward Promise Neighborhood. The Hayward Promise Neighborhood (HPN) initiative, led by California State University East Bay and funded by a \$25 million grant from the U.S. Department of Education, is a partnership of residents, local schools, colleges, government agencies, businesses, and non-profit organizations. The partnership seeks to provide long-lasting strategies and solutions to improve education, employment, safety, and health outcomes for the specified area. By teaming up with a number of public, nonprofit, and private sector organizations, the city can leverage its resources as a partner in addressing social problems impacting residents, extending its reach. While the selected neighborhood is very specific and does not encompass the entire city, the project seeks

²¹ Community Development Block Grants allow communities a fair amount of flexibility in determining where to allocate funds, provided that monies go toward addressing the specific needs of low- and moderate-income communities.

to inculcate values that will likely spill over to adjacent neighborhoods and benefit the community at large.

Seed Lending Library. The Hayward Library hosts an innovative seed lending library, coordinating donations from nonprofit and private community partners and making seeds available to all community members. The library hosts experts that help residents learn how to plant and cultivate seeds. When the plants are mature, the experts help community members harvest seeds to share with others.

Key Observations:

- Integrated, regional approaches to sustainability issues, like requiring that public transportation be co-located with affordable housing, can be helpful in addressing sustainability concerns in heavily populated urban areas. In large metropolitan areas, sustainability concerns often exceed jurisdictional boundaries, which can seem arbitrary relative to the scope of the problem. Regional frameworks can be very useful in addressing common problems.
- Collaborative approaches to sustainability and social equity issues can help each partner best leverage its resources to benefit community members. Nonprofits, private sector businesses, and local governments all have a stake in improving communities. Especially as nonprofit and local government budgets shrink, community partnerships can help address serious social concerns.

Further Resources:

- Hayward's Climate Action Plan can be found at http://www.hayward-ca.gov/GREEN-HAYWARD/CLIMATE-ACTION-PLAN/pdfs/2009/CAP_Final/Hayward_CAP_FINAL_11-6-09%20-%20full%20document.pdf.
- Information on California's Sustainable Communities Act (SB 375) can be found at <http://www.arb.ca.gov/cc/sb375/sb375.htm>.

LEWISTON, MAINE: Inclusive Engagement in a Rapidly Diversifying Community

The city of Lewiston is a historic mill town in the heart of Maine's second most-populated metropolitan area on the banks of the Androscoggin River. Throughout the 1800s, mills and a canal system along the river were constructed to support a textile and shoe industry. By the 1950s, these mills employed approximately 10,000 workers (70% of the total workforce in Lewiston). After World War I, competition from the South caused a decline in these two largest industries. Many businesses closed and thousands of jobs were lost, leading to abandonment in the downtown area. Population decreased by 15.1% from its peak of 41,779 in 1970 to 35,465 in 2011. At 17.7% of families living in poverty in 2008, Lewiston's current poverty rate is higher than the average for the State of Maine's average of 8.4%, as is the unemployment rate at 8.7%.

The city is now engaged in redeveloping its historic assets, including downtown residential and commercial areas, and moving away from an industry-only economy in an effort to redefine itself and meet resident needs in a sustainable way. Between 2000 and 2008, nearly 1,300 jobs were created, primarily in health care and education services. Higher education establishments are present in the area, including Bates College, a private, liberal arts school; the University of Southern Maine Lewiston-Auburn whose campus was established in 1989; and a branch of Kaplan University established in 2003.

The impact of the declining economy and emerging presence of a large immigrant population, known as “New Mainers,” who had initially arrived in 2001, has been the impetus for new models of service delivery and expanded consideration of social equity. Prior to 2001 when the first and unexpectedly large wave of “secondary migrants” (refugees who relocate from their community of initial resettlement to another community) from Somalia arrived, the city was 95.7% Caucasian. Estimates as recently as 2013 suggest that over 4,000 Somalis currently reside in Lewiston, representing over 10% of the total population. The intersection of immigrant and low-income residents within the population has introduced further challenges to meeting resident needs, particularly on issues of food security, affordable housing, public health, and public safety.

Major Social Equity Initiatives

Somali Immigrant Settlement. When the first wave of approximately 1,200 Somali refugees arrived unexpectedly in Lewiston between February of 2001 and May 2003, the city’s Social Services Department became the initial entry point for new residents and spearheaded establishing a process for settling the large influx of immigrants. Primary players in the network that ultimately emerged to meet the needs of new immigrants included the various departments within the city government, Catholic Charities, a nonprofit with immigrant/refugee expertise, the Lewiston School Department, and the Maine Department of Health and Human Services. Catholic Charities is the only immigrant/refugee resettlement agency in the State of Maine that serves primary and secondary migrants from all over the world, including Somalia, Sudan, and Iraq. With its headquarters located in neighboring Portland, Maine, Catholic Charities worked in partnership with the City to establish an office in Lewiston’s City Hall to administer a case management support program. The city also

Lewiston At-A-Glance

POPULATION (2010): 36,592

SQUARE MILES (2010): 35.54

POVERTY RATE: 20.5%

ANNUAL BUDGET (FY2013): \$ 98,265,345

SUSTAINABILITY PLANS AND STRATEGIES:

“Incorporating sustainable practices in all decision-making” is one of ten goals listed as a priority in the City’s Strategic Plan adopted in 2010. At the time this case study was being written, Lewiston’s Comprehensive Plan was in the process of being updated with a significant degree of community input. The City’s Strategic Plan will then be updated to ensure that it is aligned with the Comprehensive Plan.

MAJOR SOCIAL EQUITY ACTIVITIES IN COMMUNITY:

Affordable Housing, Green and Healthy Homes Initiative, Community Policing, Engaging Immigrants, Strategic Planning (for downtown development, riverfront island redevelopment, and overall City strategic and comprehensive plans), providing access to food, maintaining physical environment, public transit, bike/pedestrian routing, and promoting the earned income credit and economic literacy.



communicated with the public schools about new non-English speaking students that would be entering the system. The English Language Learner (ELL) program was established by the Lewiston School Department to serve students and their families by helping them obtain language and academic skills needed to graduate from high school college-ready.

Access to Food. Lewiston’s Social Services Department’s General Assistance program provides payment assistance for rent, food, and other necessities in the form of vouchers; but the program is intended to provide temporary support. In order to facilitate more sustainable self-sufficiency, partners like local healthcare provider, St. Mary’s Regional Medical Center are critical to increasing access to food through the development of its Nutrition Center, which functions as an emergency food pantry that serves over 375 families per week and provides nutrition education. In efforts to make it easy and convenient for residents to access needed services, the city provides space in Kennedy Park located in the downtown area for St. Mary’s to establish a farmers’ market, as well as space in the library for cooking and nutrition classes. The city also provided lots for the Lots to Gardens (LtG) program and updated a few of its zoning ordinances to enable establishment of community gardens. In 2013, 115 families were supported by the 12 community gardens.

Citizen Engagement. In May of 2004, citizens in Lewiston organized against a transformative plan called the Heritage Initiative, which eliminated low-income housing for 850 residents who had not been solicited for input. The event precipitated a change in the relationship between the city and its residents and transformed the way planning is done by emphasizing inclusive engagement. Obtaining community buy-in and input and keeping citizens informed about planning decisions has become a required practice in Lewiston. “If we sense a development will be controversial, we will tell an applicant that they have to have a neighborhood meeting,” explained Lewiston City Planner, Dave Hediger. “It helps to educate people and let them know what is going on. This helps to increase acceptance, trust, and buy-in.” Identifying and addressing issues that are highly visible to the community has contributed to greater community cohesion and a higher level of participation, particularly from low-income and minority communities. Additionally, recent plans have successfully attracted and integrated public input, including the 2012 Riverfront Island Master Plan and the city’s Comprehensive Plan update.

Increased Transportation Options. Since a significant percentage of Lewiston’s population does not own a motor vehicle, transportation policy and planning has shifted significantly from the traditional focus on street and roadways to a more comprehensive view of how to move people. The city provides pedestrian, bicycle, and public transportation options through citylink public transit services and plans and policies that facilitate safe streets for bikers and pedestrians. The citylink bus system is operated by the Lewiston-Auburn Transit Committee (LATC), an organization created through an interlocal agreement between Lewiston and its neighboring City of Auburn. The Lewiston-Auburn Bike Ped Committee, formed in 2012, advises on and reviews transportation policy and programs and is an active participant in the Androscoggin Transportation Resource Committee’s (the local Metropolitan Planning Organization) 2013 update of the regional bike and pedestrian plan. In April of 2013, both the City of Lewiston and the City of Auburn adopted identical Complete Streets policies that call for the public right-of-way to be reconfigured to ensure that all forms of transportation are served.

Community Policing. The Lewiston Police Department’s Community Resource Team (CRT) was created in 2010 through a grant from the U.S. Department of Justice Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) to improve public safety and address quality of life issues in partnership with Community Action Groups, neighborhood crime watches, volunteers in police service, immigrant and refugee groups, and other community-oriented organizations. Located downtown, the Community Resource Office was specifically designed to be accessible and welcoming to citizens, especially those who may be apprehensive about interacting with the police due to social or cultural factors. Their focus is on addressing citizen complaints and concerns, connecting citizens to resources, and conducting intense investigations into the more complex issues facing the city. Activities they are involved in include facilitating integration of immigrants groups into the community by helping them to understand local laws and customs and interacting with youth, primarily from low-income families.

Addressing Community Health Issues. In the absence of a local public health department, the Lewiston-Auburn Public Health Committee (LAPHC) was established through an Inter-Local Agreement approved by both city councils in 2008. The LAPHC is comprised of officials from the two cities, the county, and representatives from nonprofits, educational institutions, and local health providers. The LAPHC’s goal is to promote healthy communities through a well-coordinated system. Through its partnership with Healthy Androscoggin, a grassroots organization that directly works in the community to address important health issues for all of Androscoggin County, public health leaders can tackle a number of public health issues, with lead poisoning abatement as one of the largest.

Key Observations:

- Focusing events provide both a challenge and an opportunity for communities to come together around social equity issues; community leaders must learn from the successes and failures resulting from such events.
- Efforts to coordinate resources and services to meet the needs of a specific segment of the community with specialized needs, for example the large immigrant population in Lewiston, increases opportunity for disadvantaged groups, and contributes to greater social equity.

Further Resources:

- Riverfront Island Master Plan: www.riverfrontislandmasterplan.com
- The People’s Downtown Master Plan: A Project of the Visible Community. Spring 2008. <http://www.lewistonmaine.gov/DocumentCenter/Home/View/802>
Nadeau, Phil. The Somalis of Lewiston: Community Impacts of Rapid Immigrant Movement into a Small Homogenous Maine City. August 14, 2003. <http://www.brown.edu/Departments//Sociology/faculty/hsilver/immigneng/pubs/nadeau.pdf>

WASHTENAW COUNTY & THE CITY OF ANN ARBOR, MICHIGAN: Establishing Partnerships and Streamlining Processes in Social Service Delivery

Washtenaw County, in southeastern Michigan, encompasses 27 cities, villages, and townships. Its county seat, the city of Ann Arbor, is also one of the county's primary partners and home to one of the state's largest public universities, the University of Michigan. The county is primarily rural, with some urban areas, including the cities of Ann Arbor and Ypsilanti.

Washtenaw County has a long history of commitment to sustainability and social equity. Ann Arbor, whose Human Rights Commission was created in 1957 to ensure civil and political rights and prohibit discrimination for any reason, is considered an early adopter of sustainability initiatives. Its curbside recycling program, founded in 1978 by a local nonprofit called Recycle Ann Arbor, was the first in Michigan, and its energy conservation efforts began in 1981 with the designation of a \$1.4 million energy bond to implement efficiency measures in 30 different city buildings. Both Ann Arbor and Washtenaw County have living wage and antidiscrimination laws. The living wage ordinances require employers who provide services to or receive assistance from the jurisdiction to pay their employees a fixed amount.

The Great Recession of 2008–2011 had a tremendous impact on the employment rate in the county. Unemployment increased from 8% to 11%, largely because of the loss of high-paying manufacturing jobs in the eastern part, where residents saw a 30% decrease in median income during that period. The drop in income left many residents without homes, the financial means to improve their livelihoods, the skills necessary to obtain a job, or the capacity to regain self-sufficiency. Additionally, the departure in 2008 of one of the largest employers and philanthropic contributors led to the displacement of more than 2,100 workers—a loss of approximately \$6 million in annual tax revenue to both the city and the county, as well as \$5 million loss of philanthropic funds. These shocks to the local economy caused community leaders to rethink approaches to community and economic development.

Ann Arbor At-A-Glance



POPULATION (2010): 57,637

SQUARE MILES (2010): 27.83

POVERTY RATE: 21.5%

ANNUAL BUDGET (FY 2013): \$ 382,373,695

SUSTAINABILITY PLANS AND STRATEGIES: Ann Arbor's Sustainability Framework was adopted as an element of the Master Plan by the City of Ann Arbor in 2013, as part of a project funded by the Home Depot Foundation. The Framework reorganizes over 200 existing city plan goals from over 20 plans into an overarching set of 16 sustainability goals for Ann Arbor.

MAJOR COMPONENTS OF SUSTAINABILITY PLANS: The Sustainability Framework is divided into goals organized into four thematic areas that included Climate and Energy, Community, Land Use and Access, and Resource Management.

NUMBER OF STAFF DEDICATED TO SUSTAINABILITY: Two – the City's Environmental Coordinator directs sustainability activities and one full-time Sustainability Associate position is grant-funded. A number of staff within service areas works on sustainability issues.

MAJOR SOCIAL EQUITY ACTIVITIES IN COMMUNITY: Affordable Housing, Transportation Planning, Parks & Recreation, Sustainability Planning, Climate change and Adaptation, Energy Efficiency

In 2011, the community won a \$3 million grant from U.S. HUD Sustainable Communities Initiative to fund activities in six categories: (1) Washtenaw Avenue corridor redevelopment; (2) new

Washtenaw County At-A-Glance

POPULATION (2010): 342,350

SQUARE MILES: 710

POVERTY RATE: 14.2%

ANNUAL BUDGET (FY 2013): \$ 207,183,751

SUSTAINABILITY PLANS AND STRATEGIES: No formal plan for sustainability; however a number of County plans and strategies refer to sustainability, including the Washtenaw County Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (2010), Washtenaw County Five-Year Consolidated Plan (2013), Washtenaw Urban County Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Report (2012), HUD Community Planning Grant (2010), Neighborhood Stabilization Plan (2010), Re-Imagining Washtenaw Avenue (2009), and the Local Economic Development Framework (2013). Additionally, references to social equity are integrated into mission statements of the Office of Community and Economic Development and departments, such as the Department of Parks and Recreation.

NUMBER OF STAFF DEDICATED TO SUSTAINABILITY: No staff dedicated specifically to sustainability.

MAJOR SOCIAL EQUITY ACTIVITIES IN COMMUNITY: Community Action and Coordinated funding activities focusing on six human service areas: safety-net health, hunger relief, housing and homelessness, aging, early childhood, and school-age youth; investments in affordable housing; community-based economic development activities; Parks and Recreation amenities and services; and Workforce Development.

development and affordable housing in Ann Arbor; (3) affordable housing, transportation expansion, and programs to support financial self-sufficiency in Ypsilanti; (4) region-wide efforts to improve public health, access to arts and culture, and energy efficiency in rental housing; (5) food business and urban agriculture cultivation; and (6) community engagement. The joint city/county Office of Community and Economic Development (OCED) administers this grant to 15 different sub-grantees. This grant has provided support for activities that strategically address social equity in Ann Arbor and Washtenaw County.

Major Social Equity Initiatives

Shared Services for Community (and Economic) Development. The Washtenaw County Office of Community and Economic Development (OCED) represents the City of Ann Arbor, Washtenaw County, and the Washtenaw Urban County. The Washtenaw Urban County is an entity of 18 jurisdictions, including the City of Ann Arbor and Washtenaw County, created through 2004 cooperative agreements to better leverage federal U.S. HUD Grants with declining funding and develop a more streamlined, cost-efficient structure for delivering social services within the county. The city

contributed funding toward moving all staff to the county site. Social equity-related benefits from this merger include greater specialized expertise in areas for federal grant acquisition and management, increased capacity for collaboration and learning in affordable housing programs and other HUD-funded programs, and streamlined funding systems for nonprofits seeking public funds.

Coordinated Public and Private Funding. The county, city, the Urban County, and primary private sector human service funders—the Ann Arbor Community Foundation (AAACF) and the United Way of Washtenaw County—developed a single, coordinated process for funding human services initiatives within the region. This coordinated funding approach helped these collaborating entities to leverage each funder’s investment in local nonprofits; minimize duplicative work and

effort for nonprofits applying for funding; reduce overlap and eliminate redundancies between funding entities; create shared, community-level measurement of human services outcomes; and maximize the effectiveness of funds invested in targeted critical human services. Regardless of financial contribution to the investment pool, each organization has an equal stake in decision making and responsibility. Each staffing organization took on a leadership role for part of the model depending on their organizational expertise: (1) planning and coordination was managed by the United Way, (2) program operations were managed by OCED, and (3) capacity building was managed by the AAACF.

Local Economic Development Framework. In looking for an approach to more sustainable economic development and more effective community development, the Washtenaw County Board of Commissioners approved consolidation of the Office of Community Development, Economic Development & Energy, and Employment Training and Community Services to establish the Office of Community and Economic Development (OCED). The three departments had many common goals and overlapping and duplicative services and function. The Local Economic Development framework was an initiative undertaken by OCED at the request of the Washtenaw County Board of Commissioners “to ensure that workforce and economic development resources are strategically placed to provide the greatest benefit to residents and businesses,” acknowledging the understanding the equity and inclusion were important considerations in this effort. The framework referenced existing local economic research and plans to identify areas of opportunity and set goals to achieve this type of inclusive economic growth. The plan emphasizes a “bottom-up” approach to economic growth and sets measurable goals and outcomes, maps out partnerships, identifies and categorizes programs and projects, and provides an overview of the budget that would be required for these activities.

Accessible Transportation. “Good transit connections, particularly in low-income areas, help reduce the overall cost of living so that you are more able to afford a place to live, get to a good job, and provide for your children,” explained Sarah Pressprich of the Ann Arbor Area Transportation Authority (AAATA), the not-for-profit unit of government that operates the local public transit system for the greater Ann Arbor-Ypsilanti area. The 2009 Ann Arbor Regional Success Strategy highlighted a need to connect the county’s two economic hubs of the cities of Ann Arbor and Ypsilanti for sustained economic growth. As a result, increasing transportation accessibility between these two cities along the high-traffic Washtenaw Corridor and throughout the rest of the county has been a priority. “Reimagine Washtenaw,” a part of the HUD Community Challenge Grant, is a redevelopment project out of OCED with the goal of transforming the corridor by adding walkable shopping options, housing choices, efficient transit services, public spaces, bike paths, and access to jobs, education, cultural, employment centers, grocery stores, and other critical amenities and services. This effort represents a shift toward smart growth, as it places development pressure on Washtenaw Avenue. This initiative is led by OCED, with key partners including the cities of Ann Arbor and Ypsilanti, the townships of Ypsilanti and Pittsfield, Washtenaw County, Washtenaw County, and AAATA.

Community Impact Investing: A Framework for Measuring Performance. In 2013, the Washtenaw Board of Commissioners adopted a resolution to identify appropriate metrics—both for

short-term measurable outcomes and long-term impacts—tied to budget priorities in the following areas: (1) ensuring a community safety net through health and human services inclusive of public safety, (2) increasing economic opportunity and workforce development, (3) ensuring mobility and civic infrastructure for county residents, (4) reducing environmental impact, and (5) realizing internal labor force sustainability and effectiveness. Whether services in these areas are provided internally or through external partnerships, the impact of dollars invested will be monitored and reported on an on-going basis by relevant performance data. This strategic endeavor maximizes the positive results on community and economic development investments at the lowest possible cost, allowing the OCED to deliver services to all residents more effectively and sustainably.

Key Observations:

- Data-driven decision making, especially in financial investment, is essential to maximizing impact and effectively allocating resources for social service programs; however, identifying effective performance measures remains a challenge in supporting those with greatest need in the community.

Further Resources:


- TCC Group. Coordinated Funding: Lessons from a Place-Based Grantmaking Collaborative. 2013. <http://www.communitygrants.org/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2013/11/Coordinated-Funding-Executive-Summary-final.pdf>

ARLINGTON COUNTY, VIRGINIA: Using Smart Growth Principles to Increase Social Equity

Located adjacent to Washington, D.C., Arlington County has benefited from its proximity to the national capital. Its population grew dramatically from the construction of a trolley line in 1896 through the expansion of the federal government during the Depression and World War II. By 1950, the population passed 135,000; but by the 1960s, Arlington was a decaying inner suburb that was losing its population and commercial base to the growing outer suburbs of Northern Virginia. Construction of the Metrorail system that was completed in 1979 resulted in renewed growth to Arlington's 2010 population exceeding 207,000. Still, the county must deal with forces that could either weaken its economic position or alter the character of the population by changes in housing options and increased housing prices.

At 26 square miles, Arlington is the nation's geographically smallest (self-governing) county and contains no incorporated municipalities. It provides both city and county services and provides funding to the Arlington Public Schools. The population is diverse in terms of race, ethnicity, and immigrant status with a lower African-American population than the state as a whole but much higher Hispanic and foreign-born segments of the population. It has a highly educated population

Arlington At-A-Glance



POPULATION (2011 estimate): 207,627
SQUARE MILES: 26
POVERTY RATE: 7.1%
ANNUAL BUDGET (FY 2014 Net County): \$674.3 million
SUSTAINABILITY PLANS AND STRATEGIES: Arlington County Board Vision and Budget Goals for FY 2014 include references to sustainability and social equity goals.
MAJOR COMPONENTS OF SUSTAINABILITY PLANS: Sustainability is included in the county vision, the mission of the county manager's office, and the annual Management Plan. Explicit references to sustainability are found in the Community Energy Plan (CEP). Overarching framework for other components of sustainability is a commitment to "smart growth."
NUMBER OF STAFF DEDICATED TO SUSTAINABILITY: No staff specifically dedicated to sustainability because activities related to sustainability are decentralized.
MAJOR SOCIAL EQUITY ACTIVITIES IN COMMUNITY: Smart growth, affordable housing, promoting access through community design and diverse transportation options, active living for all segments of the population, citizen engagement, inclusion of low income households in energy conservation efforts, multi-faceted economic development, integration of services, restoring environmental conditions, and supporting public education.

with high income compared to the rest of the state, and the poverty level is slightly lower than the statewide rate.

Arlington views sustainability as part of its overall mission to create "a caring, learning, participating, sustainable community in which each person is important." It seeks to accomplish this mission and address social equity concerns in areas that include, but are not limited to, the following: Smart Growth, Affordable Housing, accessible community design and transportation, and citizen engagement.

Major Social Equity Initiatives

Incorporating Smart Growth Principles.

In the 1960s, the community developed a plan that promoted the use of public transportation by transit-oriented development, concentrating 11% of land area in the county around Metro stations. The county also committed itself to preserving and expanding affordable housing. This strategy created foundation for population growth and economic development while preserving environmental quality of neighborhoods, dispersing commercial areas throughout the rest of the county, and protecting interests of low-income groups. More recently, in

2005, Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) proposals closing and/or realigning Department of Defense agencies and installations resulted in approximately 4 million square feet of leased office space housing 17,000 jobs to be vacated in Arlington. In response, the county developed a new plan for the Crystal City-Pentagon City area that encouraged new uses of this space that promote diversification of its economy.

PLACE (Participation, Leadership, and Civic Engagement). A number of citizen engagement initiatives have been carried out by Arlington County since 2000. Most recently, PLACE (Participation, Leadership and Civic Engagement) was introduced in 2012 with the goal of expanding the scope and quality of citizen engagement in Arlington County by training interested members of the public and staff in citizen participation and improving the quality of involvement of citizens. It was launched with a two-day open house in collaboration with over 24 partner organizations and attended by more than 300 participants. PLACE also included weekly walk-in opportunities to meet with county board members in locations across the county and a virtual town square called PLACE Space (www.arlingtonplacespace.us). The board also approved a Framework of Citizen Engagement in 2013 that sets forth expectations for the board, the community, and staff in promoting citizen engagement and achieving the county's vision.

Affordable Housing. Arlington County's prioritization of the preservation and creation of affordable housing has been demonstrated primarily by two initiatives: (1) the creation of Committed Affordable Housing Units (CAFs), or rental units placed under agreements with private developers and non-profits that ensure affordability, and (2) establishment of the Affordable Housing Investment Fund (AHIF). As the county's main affordable housing financing, the AHIF was established in 1988 as a revolving loan fund to provide low-interest, secondary loans as an incentive for developers to provide affordable housing. The fund has been used with other affordable housing financing programs for acquisition, rehabilitation and/or development of affordable multifamily units; specialized housing for the elderly, the homeless, or persons with disabilities; and affordable home ownership opportunities. The Arlington County Board allocates funds annually, and AHIF is also supported by loan repayments and developer contributions. Loans total over \$200 million since 2000. With the county's high property values continuing to increase, the board added \$12.5 million in one-time funding for AHIF in the 2014 budget. The County has additional programs and policies that promote affordable housing, including a state-approved requirement for a mandated percentage of affordable units for new development, a locally funded Housing Grant Program to subsidizing low-income households, and a Real Estate Tax Relief program to rehabilitate older multifamily rental properties.

Other Components. Arlington makes major contributions to social equity through its parks and recreation programs including a strong emphasis on inclusion of participants from low and moderate income areas and on wellness and fitness, an aggressive energy conservation program that includes outreach to low-income residents, integration of social and health services with schools and community centers, economic development planning, and strong support for public education.²²

Key Observations:

- Sustainability is part of Arlington's vision statement. It is expressed as one of several goals along with being a community that is caring, learning, participating and respectful of each person as well as being diverse, inclusive, and secure with attractive residential and

²² Arlington spent \$17,185 per pupil in local funds in 2010—the highest local funding in Virginia. Superintendent's Annual Report for Virginia, Sources of Financial Support, Table 15, 2010.

commercial neighborhoods. In the view of officials in Arlington County, sustainability is not a separate program but part of everything the county does.


Further Resources:

- Arlington's Smart Growth Journey (video), <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VvtY9L5fPUU&feature=Playlist&p=19430DC77B9987F1&index=0>
- “Arlington: Dynamic Urban Villages Dot the Landscape,” *Virginia Town & City*. October, 2013.
- *Community Energy Plan*. Arlington County, 2013.
- *Economic Development Strategic Plan*. Arlington County, 2007.
- *Master Transportation Plan*. Arlington County, 2007.
- *PLACE Report to the County Commission*. Arlington County, 2012.

DURHAM CITY/COUNTY, NORTH CAROLINA: Promoting Equity through Neighborhood Revitalization

The City of Durham began as a railroad station and was incorporated in 1869, originally as part of Orange County. Durham County was created in 1881 with Durham City as its only incorporated municipality. Even before its incorporation, Durham had a center for small-scale manufacturing of tobacco products. In addition to tobacco, textiles were also a major industry in the twentieth century. Banks and insurance companies made Durham an important financial center with both white and black-owned companies, including the largest and oldest African-American owned life-insurance company in the nation, North Carolina Mutual Life Insurance Company. Large population increases occurred in the decades starting in 1900, 1920, 1940, and 1960, and Durham’s population exceeded 100,000 by 1970.

The decline in tobacco manufacturing began in the 1960s, but major changes occurred when Liggett and Myers moved its headquarters to New York in 1979. After virtually no growth in the 1970s, Durham has experienced sustained growth since 1980 while experiencing a transformation in its economy. The Research

Durham City At-A-Glance 

POPULATION (2010): 228,330
SQUARE MILES (2010): 94.9
POVERTY RATE: 18.6%
ANNUAL BUDGET (FY2014 General Fund): \$169.6 million

Durham County At-A-Glance

POPULATION (2010): 267,587
SQUARE MILES (2010): 298
POVERTY RATE: 17.1%
ANNUAL BUDGET (FY2014 General Fund): \$360.3 million General Fund Budget (Fiscal Year 2014) that includes transfer to Durham Public Schools of \$119.6 million for a net county budget of \$240.7 million.
SUSTAINABILITY PLANS AND STRATEGIES: Durham County’s Strategic Plan includes references to sustainability.
MAJOR SOCIAL EQUITY ACTIVITIES IN COMMUNITY: Restoration and expansion of physical and cultural assets, strong neighborhoods, economic and workforce development, public safety, wellness, subsidies for energy conservation, and access.

Triangle Park, established in undeveloped land in the middle of an area marked off by Raleigh, Chapel, and Durham, has contributed to Durham's evolving economy since its inception in the 1960's. With over 300 medical firms and practices, healthcare is now the area's leading industry. Higher education has also been important in its development given the presence of Duke University, the city's largest employer, and North Carolina Central University.

Despite its assets, Durham has been challenged for the past fifty years. Although it came through the civil rights revolution in the 1960s with greater cohesion than many southern cities, the changing economic base, and redevelopment of commercial and residential areas in the black community, contributed to serious racial division in the city and high levels of crime that extended into the new century. It has revitalized its downtown and seeks to restrain sprawling settlement patterns to achieve "more human-scaled, sustainable development." The city and county also seek to ensure that persons with limited socioeconomic resources are not left behind in the expanding high-tech economy that contributes to Durham's success. Finally, the city has experienced a reduction in crime over the past decade and now has lower rates than its peers in the region and the nation as a whole.

Major Social Equity Initiatives

Adaptive Reuse for Urban Renewal. Revival of Durham starting in the 1980s was based on a mix of adaptive reuse of existing structures along with new construction. Two abandoned tobacco factories were converted into a distinctive shopping center in an area adjacent to the focal City Center district, and nearby neighborhoods attracted new residents who restored historic houses. In 1993, Downtown Durham, Inc. (DDI)—a 501(c) 6 organization with a board consisting of government officials and business and community leaders—was formed to serve as a catalyst for downtown revitalization in close cooperation with the city and county governments. As an intermediary between government and the business sector, DDI helped to structure public-private partnership agreements for consideration by local governments. The major tools for renovating historic buildings are Historic Tax Credits, local landmark status that provides a permanent 50% tax abatement, and New Market Tax Credits. These credits have been critical to financing the renovation of the American Tobacco Campus near City Center, which catalyzed a substantial increase in development and formation of a plan intended to promote sustainable and green development by extensive reuse of existing structures.

Neighborhood Renewal. Supporting the goal of healthy neighborhoods means supporting affordable housing and promoting accessibility. Support for the development of affordable housing was increased with the approval of a "penny for housing" in the 2012 city budget. The one-cent tax increase, which generates about \$2.4 million per year, creates a dedicated funding source for affordable housing initiatives to make up for cuts in federal grant programs in order to contribute to revitalizing residential areas and assisting homeless persons, as well as providing urgent home repairs to the elderly and the disabled, site and infrastructure preparations, acquisitions, and demolitions. Providing physical access is enhanced by community design, decentralized development, and multiple modes of transportation. Two of Durham's major neighborhood initiatives reflect alternative approaches designed to meet local conditions. The Northeast Central Durham neighborhood has been the focus of efforts to improve conditions and reduce crime since the late

1990s. The Livability Initiative grew out of a two-day community workshop in 2010 that assessed the past, catalogued the strengths and weaknesses of the area, and identified ways to align the local vision with a wide range of external resources. The initiative seeks to incorporate the principles of livability developed by HUD, EPA, and DOT with goals in the areas of (1) Workforce and Economic Development, (2) Safe and Healthy Environment, (3) Coordinated Public Transportation, and (4) Multifunctional Community Open Space. The Neighborhood Improvement Services (NIS) Department that coordinates NECD activities has used the neighborhood as a model of integrated approaches to promote livability in all parts of the city. In comparison, the Southside redevelopment area includes a 20-acre tract within a half mile of the attractions constructed in downtown Durham that was cleared in the late 1960s and an adjoining neighborhood with high levels of empty lots, unoccupied structures, and low owner occupancy in the remaining houses. In its approach to supporting new housing construction, the city is promoting mixed-income communities in hopes of enhancing performance in schools, lowering rates of crime, and increasing social viability by avoiding concentrations of low-income residences.

Local Workforce Development. When economic development incentives are provided to developers, they are required to create and implement a plan to make good faith efforts to use Durham-based firms for contracting activities. They are also be required to enter into a Workforce Development plan to ensure that Durham residents have the first opportunity to apply for the available jobs that will be created. For persons seeking employment, services are provided to acquire training and to search for jobs through professional networking, work readiness support, career development and counseling services, educational information and financial assistance, and a variety of support services. Opportunities for training within occupations that have growth potential are available in partnership with NC Works. The Office of Economic and Workforce Development (OEWD) OEWD also offers specialized services for persons with disabilities, veterans, older workers, persons that are economically disadvantaged, and former offenders. The Partners Against Crime (PAC) program promotes collaboration among police officers, Durham residents, and city and county government officials to find sustainable solutions to community crime problems and quality of life issues. It is a community based volunteer organization that promotes and executes safety strategies to prevent crime at the neighborhood level. Each of Durham Police Department's five police districts has a PAC organization that holds monthly meetings. The PAC groups have purchased bicycles for two of the Police Department's bicycle squads, translation equipment so Spanish-speaking residents can attend meetings, digital speed trailers to help with neighborhood speed enforcement, and motion detector lights for elderly residents. A PAC group purchased playground equipment to replace apparatus destroyed by vandalism. PAC groups have also worked to get rid of dilapidated housing in their neighborhoods.

Partnership for a Healthy Durham. In 2004, the county Department of Public Health took over the Partnership for a Healthy Durham (Partnership), an organization originally created to convene community members to improve health outcomes. The Partnership became a bridge between local government and community organizations and a place to meet people, develop relationships, and create effective projects. The Partnership collects and distributes county health data and participates in strategic planning. The Partnership coordinator leads the triennial community health assessment,

a report based on assessment findings that supports a countywide process for determining health priorities for the next three years. With these priorities, the Department of Health collaborates with Durham Public Schools and a community coalition—End Poverty Durham—to strategically address issues. In his State of the City address on February 9, the mayor of Durham also identified reducing poverty as a major goal of the city starting this year and continuing over time.

Key Observations:

- Expanding affordable housing and fostering livable neighborhoods requires investments by the city and partnership with residents.
- Promoting economic development requires building the workforce as well as pursuing and creating new economic opportunities.
- Increasing safety and security entails community-based approaches and partnerships between law enforcement officials and residents.
- Wellness is essential to a vibrant community and requires a comprehensive approach.

Further Resources:

- Partnership for a Healthy Durham, www.healthydurham.org/docs/Roadmaps%20to%20Health%20Prize%20Essay%20I%202013.pdf
- Durham County: Strategic Plan Progress Report 2013. strategicplan.dconc.gov/sample/DCOStratPlanProgress.pdf and strategicplan.dconc.gov/page/Progress.aspx. In the strategic plan progress report, sustainability is used only in connection to environmental stewardship.

CLARK COUNTY, WASHINGTON: Promoting Equity Through a Public Health Lens

Clark County is located in southwest Washington, bordered by the Columbia and Lewis rivers. There are three separate port districts with their own elected boards of commissioners who are responsible for the maintenance of the various ports. The county seat, Vancouver, is directly across the Columbia River from Portland, Oregon. Vancouver’s population of over 165,000 makes it the largest city in the county of 438,287, with the remainder of the population spread across 629 square miles. The county is largely rural and is adjacent to state and national forests.

Clark County is slightly more conservative than Washington as a whole, and its residents

Clark County At-A-Glance



POPULATION (2010): 438,287
SQUARE MILES (2010): 656
POVERTY RATE: 11.7%
ANNUAL BUDGET (FY2013 Budgeted Expenditures): \$ 848,284,522

SUSTAINABILITY PLANS AND STRATEGIES: In 2007, the Board of Clark County Commissioners adopted a one-page sustainability policy that was expected to be extended into a full plan, but eventually did not. The 2012 Growing Healthier: Planning for a healthier Clark County report addresses social equity.

MAJOR SOCIAL EQUITY ACTIVITIES IN COMMUNITY: Public Health, Food Access, Aging, Affordable Housing

seem proud of its reputation as a suburban and rural mecca in juxtaposition to its more famously eccentric, liberal neighboring Portland to the south. The county is very car-dependent and dotted with food deserts. While the perception of increasing diversity was discussed by a number of local government administrators, census data puts the white population in the county at 87.9%. Many people live in Vancouver and the surrounding area but commute to Portland for work - housing is much more affordable in Clark County and the population is significantly less densely concentrated.

The county has three commissioners who concurrently serve as the county's Board of Health (BOH). There is currently one coordinator devoted exclusively to sustainability, and sustainability activities are spread throughout all levels and departments of the government. While the local government does not have a stand-alone sustainability plan, its Board of Clark County Commissioners did have a brief sustainability policy adopted in 2007.

Major Social Equity Initiatives

Addressing Social Equity through Public Health. Social equity has been framed as a public health issue. Since 1996, Clark County Public Health has published a report card detailing findings on illness and associated risk factors every three years. The 2009 report card significantly expanded understanding of the determinants of public health and established a holistic framework that was remarkably (though not intentionally) consistent with sustainability concerns. The 2012 Growing Healthier: Planning for a Healthier Clark County report, published by the Clark County Public Health Advisory Council and Clark County Public Health, took this approach even further. The report includes the following categories: access to healthy food, active transportation and land use, parks and open spaces, economic opportunity, affordable and quality housing, climate and human health, environmental quality, and safety and social connections. The report represents a significant undertaking; it took 15 months to draft because of the extensive background work required. Each subcategory has its own report in order to establish how the concern is related to public health in the community along with baseline indicators demonstrating the current performance of the community relative to the concerns listed.

The Aging Readiness Plan. In order to address the needs of an aging population, the county developed a thorough Aging Readiness Plan that was finalized in 2012. The plan was developed by the county's Aging Readiness Task Force and Community Planning team. Former Commissioner Mark Boldt is cited in the report as noting that the goal is for Clark County to be a great place in which to "grow up and grow old". Anticipated growth in the number of seniors in the community is 158% from 2005-2030. By 2030, 1 in 4 county residents will be over 60 years old. The report establishes priorities to address the changing needs of residents and the subsequent demands that may be placed on local government resources in six sections: Healthy Communities, Housing, Transportation/Mobility, Supportive Services, and Community Engagement. For each area, the plan provides background information, an assessment of the current situation, and a number of strategies for addressing related issues going forward. A number of strategies are suggested in order to address observed deficiencies and preferences expressed through community engagement processes.

Affordable Housing. Clark County's Planet Clark Emerald House is a demonstration of the county's commitment to sustainable, affordable, quality housing that facilitates residents' ability to age in place. Coordinating with a number of nonprofits and Washington State University, the home has universal design features, is energy efficient, and has zero runoff from storm water. Built in collaboration with the local chapter of Habitat for Humanity, the home will be occupied by a low-income family who also participated in the construction of the home. The home was built on a county-owned site that had been abandoned and was severely neglected. It is located in a space that is accessible by public transportation and is based on universal accessibility principles. The house was dedicated on November 27, 2013. The home is both a residence but also a tool for education on sustainability and social equity issues. From inception to finalization, the public was invited to participate in the project.

78th Street Heritage Farm. The county collaborates with many partners to maintain 78th Street Heritage Farm for the community to use as a sustainable food source. Heritage Farm is located on a 79-acre site that was maintained by the county as a poor farm until the early 1900's. After a successful community engagement process to gather feedback regarding the preferred use of the site, it was determined that the site would remain agricultural and be used as a resource for education and food production to benefit local residents. The site has been divided into sections that are maintained by different community groups for a variety of purposes. One acre has been dedicated to the 4-H Restorative Community Services Garden that is set-aside for at-risk youth. The two-acre Roots to Road program at the site is maintained in partnership with Partners in Career (PIC), a local nonprofit that is dedicated to developing individual self-sufficiency through job training and employment services. Ten acres have been specifically donated to the Clark County Food Bank. The site is maintained with community volunteers, Churches in Partnership, and the Larch Corrections Center. The site has produced over 50,000 pounds of produce for the food bank.

Key Observations:

- In Clark County, an alternate organizing strategy (for public health) has been successful in structuring a cohesive response to concerns about economic vitality, environmental sustainability, and equity in access to community resources.
- Elected leadership is crucial in allocating resources for the planning and implementation of holistic sustainability and social equity strategies. In the absence of the support of elected leadership, staff may turn their attention to fostering an educative relationship with elected officials instead of focusing on implementation strategies.
- Positive partnerships and collaborations with local nonprofits and institutions of post-secondary education produce outcomes that support the community.

Further Resources:

- The Growing Healthier: Planning for a healthier Clark County report. March 2012. www.clark.wa.gov/public-health/community/growing_healthy/documents/GrowingHealthierReport23Mar2012-1.pdf.

- The 2009 Clark County Community Report Card can be found at <http://www.clark.wa.gov/public-health/reports/documents/CCReportCard2009Final.pdf>.
- A local news channel produced a segment on the Roots to Road program at Heritage Farm. The video can be found at <http://www.katu.com/news/local/Veterans-find-strength-through-farming-program-178463181.html?tab=video&c=y>.
- Clark County Aging Readiness Plan can be found at http://www.clark.wa.gov/planning/aging/documents/12-0207_ARTF_Plan_Final_Maps_Complete_Print.pdf.
- A brief video on Planet Clark Emerald House can be found at <http://emerald.planetclark.com/homepage-featured/emerald-house-dedication-video/>

MANATEE COUNTY, FLORIDA: Incorporating Sustainability Into How We Will Grow


Located along Florida’s west coast, Manatee County has six municipalities, each with diverse populations and distinct characters and identities. Four of the six communities are located on barrier islands with the largest two municipalities located on the mainland. The county has seen strong, continuous population growth for the past 100 years and anticipates continued growth for the next 18 years. It has a year-round population of 330,000; seasonal or recreational visitors from November to April increase the population size by an estimated 30%.

A commitment to “doing the right thing” and improving the quality of life for all citizens of Manatee County has been a priority for government staff and elected officials, community groups, businesses, and residents. The economic downturn had a significant negative effect on the county from 2007 to 2011. As a result, the county has looked at its growth more carefully. The economic downturn has also provided an impetus for a number of other equity-related initiatives, specifically in response to the need for job creation across a spectrum of levels of skills and education. Additionally, it has resulted in more attention being focused on how to provide services for those that need it in the most equitable and cost-effective way possible.

Major Social Equity Initiatives

The “How We Will Grow” Plan. This plan came from challenges that arose from the boom and bust economy from 2000-2005. In 2012, the county’s Building and Development Services department took the lead in creation of the “How Will We Grow” report, which includes recommendations for policy to guide more strategic land use and infrastructure planning. The resulting plan examines infrastructure as assets in determining how to write policy to encourage growth, as developed through solicitation of public input from over 45 community presentations in

Manatee County At-A-Glance



POPULATION (2010): 322,833
SQUARE MILES (2010): 742.93
POVERTY RATE: 13.6%
ANNUAL BUDGET (FY2013): \$ 1,005,910,713
SUSTAINABILITY PLANS AND STRATEGIES: Manatee County 5-Year Consolidated Plan for Program Years 2012/2013-2016/2017, *How We Will Grow* growth plan
MAJOR SOCIAL EQUITY ACTIVITIES IN COMMUNITY: Neighborhood Development, Affordable Housing, Job Creation, Gang and Graffiti Prevention, Complete Streets, Food Access, Community Healthcare, Library Programs, Natural Resources Programs, Recycling

2012 and 2013. As a result, the Board of County Commissioners decided to allocate resources for the redevelopment of the southwest area of the county along with areas with more dense and concentrated growth. The southwest area in Manatee county is generally older, with high concentrations of low-income and minority communities.

Indigent Health Care Funding. Since 1984, the county has administered the Manatee County Healthcare System to provide monies for indigent care and other health-related purposes within Manatee County in accordance with federal law. Initial contributions to the fund came largely from the sale of a publicly owned hospital, Manatee Memorial. Although the fund was meant to be self-sustaining, interest rates are only a fraction of what is needed to sustain the costs; thus the fund is projected to run out sometime in 2015. The Manatee County Chamber of Commerce has taken on a leadership role in partnering with the county through funding the Manatee County Healthcare study to identify the county's most significant challenges in 2007 and spearheading the formation of the Manatee County Health Care Alliance (MCHCA) comprising every major healthcare player, including many specialist and health care providers, with the goal of introducing a new way for the county to treat, implement, and pay for health care for those who cannot afford it with the approaching fund depletion.

Sustainable Affordable Housing. Affordable housing programs primarily focus on providing sustainable, affordable housing for the low-income and elderly population of the community. One of their programs is the Impact Fee Program, a voluntary incentive program that offsets increasing cost of impact fees by freezing some county impact fees at 2005 rates and covering the rest through the county's General Revenue funds. Results of the program include construction of 208 affordable housing units through participation of 21 builders. Staff has taken measures to make investments that ensure that housing units remain affordable for residents by requiring green building practices, such as installing air conditioning units that are energy efficient, adding insulation, and installing hurricane impact windows. Partnerships with private builders and community groups, like Manatee County Habitat for Humanity, have been integral to the success of these programs and will continue to be as Manatee County meets the needs of new segments of the community, such as individuals with disabilities and veterans.

Neighborhood Revitalization. "This new focus on neighborhood revitalization has changed the way I look at the community. Now we're looking at neighborhoods—streets and blocks—with the county, particularly going into South County, which is struggling. Habitat can look at that community and ask how we can be part of efforts to the revitalize that community and what we can bring to the table to help," explained Diana Shoemaker, executive director of Manatee County Habitat for Humanity. As an additional measure to revitalize distressed areas, the county administrator created the Neighborhood Planning Division in 2007 to empower and guide neighborhood associations to improvement by fostering partnerships, asset-based mapping, enhanced communication, disaster preparedness, and efforts to strengthen communities.

Key Observations:

- Leadership on social equity-related initiatives was cultivated through a top-down approach from the county administrator to the department heads and staff.
- Renewed focus on sustainable growth and improved quality of life for county residents has led to neighborhood-level development of distressed areas of the community, where many low-income residents live.
- Communicating the value of investment in social sustainability often requires a bottom-line focused approach and consideration of long-term benefits.

Further Resources:

- Manatee County, Florida. *Five-Year Consolidated Plan 2012/ 2017 Program Years*. www.mymanatee.org/home/government/departments/neighborhood-services/community-development/reports.html
- Manatee County Community Services. “History of Indigent Health Care Funding.” March 6, 2013. www.mymanatee.org/published/March%202012,%202013%20-%20Regular%20Meeting%20on%20Tuesday,%20March%202012,%202013/AC62B0EF-3A50-4A80-862C-0666DAC29594.pdf
- Download the full “How We Will Grow Report (January 15, 2013) at www.mymanatee.org/home/government/departments/building-and-development-services/planning-zoning/how-will-we-grow.html

Case Study Findings

From conducting case study research in nine communities across the United States, there were several recurring findings that serve as replicable best practices for other local governments seeking to strengthen the social dimension of their activities related to sustainability:

- 1. Inclusive citizen engagement has played a critical role in improving the quality of public projects, improving relationships between the public and city government, and increasing the overall quality of life for community residents.**
 - Citizen engagement initiatives in Dubuque have allowed community leaders to better identify local priorities and address critical challenges faced. The Sustainable Dubuque Collaboration was created in 2011 to carry on the goals of the original Sustainable Dubuque Task Force. It coordinates community education and engagement among participating organizational and individual members to achieve goals and coordinate efforts to collect data and monitor progress.
 - Since the catalytic resistance of residents to Lewiston’s 2004 Heritage Initiative neighborhood transformation plan, the importance of engaging citizens in planning decisions that will affect them has been emphasized and put to practical use. A number

of recent plans for development and revitalization incorporate significant community input, including the Riverfront Island Master Plan and revised Comprehensive Plan.

- In 2012, Arlington introduced PLACE (Participation, Leadership and Civic Engagement), with the goal of expanding the scope and quality of citizen engagement. The goals are to expand participation in important county decision-making processes, train both interested members of the public and staff in citizen participation, and improve the quality of the involvement of citizens in county government, while setting realistic expectations for broader participation in decision making.

2. Formal and informal networks of service providers and stakeholders are needed to advance social equity goals because of their complexity and cross-sectoral nature.

- Building a network of partnerships in Lewiston, Maine to provide specialized services to secondary immigrants was highly successful and led to increased ability to tackle other issues faced by community. Understanding the landscape of expertise of the various stakeholders in social services requires deliberately allocating resources to outreach and building relationships.
- In Ann Arbor/Washtenaw County, Michigan, over 18 partners (including the largest players in economic development—universities, large and small companies, municipalities, the state-level economic development agency, and other organizations) work together to strategically plan around economic and workforce development.
- Foundations and Chambers of Commerce have been critical partners and taken on a leadership role in advancing social equity in communities, including Dubuque, IA; Ann Arbor-Washtenaw County, MI; and Manatee County, Florida. These organizations have taken a lead role in addressing critical social equity issues, such as public health.
- Through the Smarter, Sustainable Dubuque Partnership in Dubuque, Iowa, equity shares of sustainability initiatives are spread out among local government, private organizations and non-profit owners, which is exceptionally important as local government financial resources are increasingly constrained. There are non-governmental organizations in Dubuque that are willingly contributing financial and other resources to support partnership-based efforts.
- The Hayward Promise Neighborhood integrates the efforts of over 21 community partners toward improving outcomes for a significantly marginalized neighborhood. Led by CSU East Bay, a number of local governments, education nonprofits, and business partners are pursuing a healthier and safer neighborhood in Hayward that has improved literacy rates and access to technology.

3. Clearly articulating the importance of social equity in local government mobilizes support and resources.

- Through its Coordinated Funding Approach, local government leaders in Ann Arbor–Washtenaw County have identified maintaining and expanding the “social safety net” as

a major priority and have assigned responsibility for each of its six priority areas to six different governmental and nonprofit organizations.

- Fort Collins conducted a social equity “gap analysis” to identify areas in which important needs were not being met. This analysis has demonstrated a significant affordable housing shortage and yielded an ongoing Housing Affordability Policy Study.
- Durham faced the shortage of affordable housing openly and adopted a “penny for housing” tax increase in 2012.

4. Actions and standards at the state level impact local programs.

- The requirements established by the state of California are helpful in providing clear, standardized measurements, but it was repeatedly noted that flexibility in how those requirements are met would be more helpful than an imposition of ends and means.
- In Clark County, a number of individuals noted that laws established at the state level help in furthering sustainability programs at a consistent pace. Many expressed their hope that more assertive state laws might be passed in the near future.
- Arlington County benefitted from enabling legislation in state government that authorized an affordable housing mandate. The absence of state authorization in North Carolina limits the options Durham has to include affordable housing in new projects.

5. A holistic approach to comprehensively serving the needs of the most marginalized groups in a community is critical to achieving social equity.

- A comprehensive social services system has been established for the immigrant population in Lewiston. This system provides ensures that members of this group have adequate nutrition, health care services, safe housing, jobs, and access to education; in addition to engaging members of this group into the greater community through opportunities to participate in youth groups and community planning.
- The primary goal of the Office of Economic and Community Development in Ann Arbor is to provide access to quality jobs for those who need it. This is facilitated through workforce development, affordable housing, and access to transportation for all.
- In Durham, services to support social equity come from housing improvement and development, neighborhood services, energy conservation, manpower development, community gardening, healthy living, police, social and health services, and transportation.

6. In local governments that are truly pursuing a holistic approach to sustainability, sustainability activities are dispersed throughout a number of departments in local governments. Sustainability offices rarely encapsulate all sustainability activities undertaken by the local government as a whole.

- Fort Collins is perhaps the most purposefully organized in terms of formal sustainability operations, with a chief sustainability officer who oversees social sustainability,

environmental services, and economic health, but the environmental services director was quick to point out a number of sustainability related activities being undertaken by many departments in the local government. While the Sustainability Services Area coordinates sustainability on behalf of the city, it is not the only locus of sustainability activity in the city.

- In Clark County, there is a single coordinator responsible for all sustainability reporting and for advocating for sustainability within local government, but sustainability is incorporated into all planning processes and departmental strategies.
- Washtenaw County takes a comprehensive approach to sustainable and equitable community development that strategically addresses both social and economic equity-related issues out of its Office of Community and Economic Development.
- Dubuque’s sustainability plan, Sustainable Dubuque, established sustainability as a broad visionary approach versus an overly prescriptive plan with multiple pages of objectives, action items, new policy recommendations and programs. The city describes Sustainable Dubuque as the “lens through which city operations are developed and analyzed . . . “(l)ikewise there are numerous community initiatives . . . along with businesses that are finding ways to save money and improve their environment and community by implementing the principles that define Sustainable Dubuque.
- In Durham, the office most visibly identified with sustainability is focused on reduction in energy usage, and other activities are the responsibility of a wide range of departments as well as contributors outside of local government.
- Arlington includes sustainability in its vision statement and multiple aspects of sustainability are contained in the annual Management Plan for the county. Policies and activities that promote sustainability are found across a wide range of departments, but there is not a separate sustainability program.

7. There are a number of organizing themes by which the objectives of sustainability and social equity can be achieved. In cases where there is a tradition of supporting other goals or where sustainability, climate change, or equity are particularly politically sensitive topics, other organizing strategies can be successful in achieving desired outcomes.

- In Clark County, public health equity was the organizing strategy by which environmental, economic, and equity objectives were successfully articulated.
- In Arlington, smart growth is the long-standing commitment that reinforces attention to housing, neighborhood conditions, transportation, energy conservation, and economic development.
- In Lewiston, integrating a large group of new immigrants and refugees into the community through establishing appropriate programs and partnerships was an overriding theme.

8. Local governments can encourage the acceptance of certain initiatives (for example, affordable housing or housing that is universally accessible, green building, or

increasing the number of health food outlets in the community) by well-designed incentives that avoid unintended barriers to desired projects.

- Through a program called SARD (Sustainable Affordable Residential Development) in 2009, Clark County worked with a group of consultants to process a plan for green development in order to identify and remove unintended roadblocks to the project. Zoning and planning requirements were reviewed and adjusted in order to allow sustainable development projects to be approved in a more streamlined manner.
- Arlington offers the alternative of requiring 10% of units in housing projects be affordable or paying the equivalent of the value of 15% of the units into the Affordable Housing Investment Fund.

9. Local governments can advance particular objectives by demonstration and information.

- Durham and Arlington (others) are providing garden space in unused lots, incorporating gardens in parks and governmental facilities, and offering instruction of gardening and cooking with fresh ingredients.
- Arlington has insulation assistance patterned after master gardeners. The Energy Masters program provides hands-on training in energy efficiency and weatherization techniques to make energy and water saving improvements in low-income apartments. The program also includes a special apprenticeship opportunity for high school and college students.
- Durham has a demonstration project with convenience stores to offer fresh foods, including information about how to properly store food.

10. Targeted outreach and assistance are required to involve low-income households in energy conservation projects thereby extending the benefits of reduced utility bills to persons in need.

- With funding from the Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant (EECBG) and Climate Showcase Communities program of EPA, the Neighborhood Energy Retrofit Program (NERP) and Home Energy Savings Program (HESP) have focused on installing a few highly effective upgrades in existing residences in Durham, with a target of reducing energy use by 20% in participating homes. Improvements have been in over 700 homes of low- and moderate-income residents.

11. Support from elected leadership for sustainability and social equity initiatives is crucial for the long-term commitment necessary to achieve positive results. In the absence of such leadership, resources may be redistributed to address other priorities, thereby diminishing the positive impact sustainability programs might otherwise achieve.

- In Clark County, the most recent election resulted in a change in leadership and subsequent change in priorities. Public health and sustainability were de-emphasized by the new leadership, who are ideologically in favor of a much smaller scope of government primarily emphasizing business interests.
- Arlington County Commission is a champion of the smart growth philosophy and expanding support for affordable housing, energy conservation, active living, and education.
- In Fort Collins, the importance of a supportive city council with high expectations was repeatedly noted. The council encourages innovation but expects measurable results in support of their objectives.

12. Leadership on social equity-related initiatives can come from staff members at all areas of local government; and social service-oriented staff is required for success in social equity-related initiatives. Initiatives can be pursued laterally and vertically.

- A focus on social inclusion is evident in all levels of local government in Manatee County. The county administrator has a broad vision for social sustainability as it impacts economic viability, and this vision guides staff to take a holistic approach to future growth within the county that focuses on ensuring equal opportunities for all residents moving forward. Leadership in equity and inclusion issues is also promoted within internal county departments; for example, the Parks and Natural Resources Department offers many low-cost, accessible programs to ensure that all segments of the community can participate.
- The Durham Urban Innovation Center within the Neighborhood Improvement Services Department is exploring broad strategies for neighborhood revitalization and sustainability that include the involvement of other departments and citizens. The center has produced concept papers on affordable housing and the linkages between housing and transit, agriculture, arts, brownfields, and health with funding from a HUD Fair Housing Partnership Grant.

13. Restoring the physical assets of the past in the downtown and neighborhood redevelopment and preserving history and cultural traditions provide the foundation for revitalization and new developments in distressed neighborhoods.

- Community and social vibrancy in Dubuque proceeds in step with economic advancement and economic redevelopment that builds from the region's past. Dubuque has a number of plans for redevelopment of the downtown, the Port of Dubuque, the lower income Washington Neighborhood, and the Historic Millwork District, Dubuque's former center of commerce. The district is a model template of complete streets and innovative street scape design to recreate a historic and culturally interesting sense of place in a part of town that for years had been on a downward slope.
- The revival of Durham starting in the 1980s was based on a mix of adaptive reuse of existing structures along with new construction. Economic development activities stressed finding new occupants for renovated structures in the downtown area.

Revitalizing and reusing existing structures, especially school building with historic and cultural significance, has also been an element in neighborhood revitalization efforts.

14. Performance metrics in social equity leave a considerable amount to be desired. Community and public health seem to be the areas of social equity in which indicators are most fully developed.

- In Manatee County, the Manatee County Health Department uses data and mapping tools in order to address the one of its priority issues of food deserts. Availability of this data has allowed public official to establish and promote farmer’s markets and stands where most critically needed. Several other public officials mentioned a desire for better measurements of performance in initiatives related to social equity, such as for the “How We Will Grow” development plan.
- Partners in public health in the City of Lewiston (including the county-level public health agency, Healthy Androscoggin, two private hospitals, and other community health agencies) used data from the State of Maine’s 2011 OneMaine Health Assessment to conduct a local assessment in order to design and implement cost-effective ways to improve the health of the population. One of the largest public health issues, lead poisoning, disproportionately affects downtown housing stock where many low-income residents live. Data on lead poisoning is tracked through hospital partners, the Maine Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program, and the Maine Office of Geographic Information Systems.
- In Washtenaw County, data is collected on a multitude of indicators for social equity-related initiatives, including data related to jobs, for grant requirements, including U.S. HUD programs and the County Budget, and information collected through resident satisfaction surveys; however key stakeholders are engaged in efforts to identify the most effective indicators to improve impact and resource allocation. In 2013, the Washtenaw Board of Commissioners adopted a resolution to identify appropriate metrics—both for short-term measurable outcomes and long-term impacts—tied to budget priorities in the following areas: (1) ensuring a community safety net through health and human services inclusive of public safety, (2) increasing economic opportunity and workforce development, (3) ensuring mobility and civic infrastructure for county residents, (4) reducing environmental impact, and (5) realizing internal labor force sustainability and effectiveness.

OVERALL FINDINGS

Based on analysis of all data collected for this investigation, including survey results and case studies, additional general findings emerge. The following observations help to shape recommendations designed to increase the capacity of local governments to increase social equity in their communities and increase public awareness of social equity in sustainability.

- Surprisingly few governments are organizing and resourcing their sustainability initiatives in a centralized manner or through a comprehensive plan. Fewer still are addressing social equity issues as an integrated part of their sustainability strategies. The distribution of actions adopted related to sustainability overall, and to equity in particular, are more heavily concentrated at the low end than is typical for the diffusion of many innovations. Moving the distribution of all local governments toward the “middle” is needed in sustainability overall and in social equity in particular. The distribution of actions adopted is more heavily concentrated at the low end than is typical for the diffusion of many innovations, which generally follows a bell curve. The foundation for expansion of activities related to sustainability is established, but the priority assigned to sustainability needs to be increased if the level of activity is to expand across the board. Fortunately, there are many good examples from early adopters and leaders in sustainability to provide guidance to those governments that are waiting to get more involved. Thus it is important to get the governments that are leaders in sustainability more involved in social equity.
- Communities should develop either a comprehensive plan (with measures) or a comprehensive assessment tool to provide a scorecard of what is being accomplished toward addressing sustainability that integrates the social equity component. This approach helps to ensure that interrelated activities support each other and that there are not gaps in coverage.
- Better measures and comprehensive monitoring of accomplishments in all aspects of sustainability are needed. The STAR Community Index is comprehensive but can be overwhelming in its detail. Each community can develop its own principles related to sustainability goals with indicators of performance. Dubuque offers a strong example of a comprehensive framework for evaluation with measure to show how when it is doing.²³ Other communities have extensive measures but have not drawn them together in one place with clear reference to the aspect of sustainability that they are measuring.
- A more comprehensive approach to sustainability, with a better definition and justification for social equity, is often needed. During the case study interviews, when local government officials and community members were asked, “How is social equity promoted in your sustainability program?” common responses were the following:
 - “It depends what you mean by sustainability.”
 - “It depends what you mean by equity.”

²³ http://www.sustainabledubuque.org/documents/filelibrary/documents/Final_Report_with_Appendices_29E33A454A218.pdf

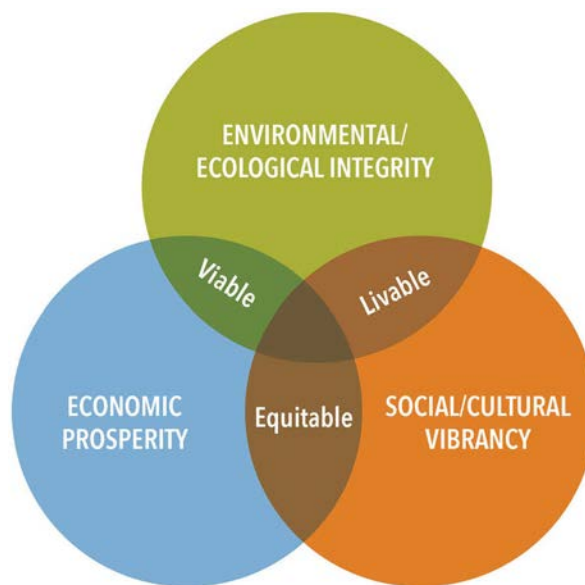
- It is necessary to present a clear rationale. This study suggests that communities think about sustainability as a comprehensive approach to improving livability and viability in the community and region. This approach necessarily includes social equity as a central dimension in promoting vitality and vibrancy in the present and sound prospects for the future. This approach is consistent with general definitions of sustainability but focuses on the special conditions of local governments. Key points for rationalizing social equity activities are as follows:
 - Exclusion and inequality are not sustainable practices.
 - Put simply, we're all in this together economically, socially, and environmentally. If we want livable and viable communities, we must pursue a comprehensive approach to sustainability.

REEXAMINATION OF APPROACHES TO DEFINING AND RATIONALIZING SUSTAINABILITY

A central question in the case studies was to determine how the local government defines and explains social equity as part of their sustainability program. As noted in the findings, if local officials do not know what social equity means or how it is related to sustainability, they are less likely to adopt programs that promote social equity. The introductory section of this report examined the connections that have been made in the conceptual foundations for sustainability, but the case studies offered the opportunity to see how equity is being related to sustainability in practice. The case studies indicate a need for a sustainability framework that supports the incorporation of social equity and coordination of the three dimensions of sustainability. This concluding section reexamines alternative ways that social equity is related to the other critical aspects of sustainability in order to develop a clearer rationale.

The long-standing approach has emphasized giving attention to three dimensions of sustainability—this is the “three-legged stool” model.²⁴ This concept implies that if the social equity leg is missing, the stool will fall over. Stated positively, “the concept is that everyone in a community – not just those on the ‘A List’ – needs the opportunity to participate and thrive in order for that community to sustain itself indefinitely.”²⁵ According to Norman Krumholz, it is based on “generating city policies and community partnerships intended to address concerns related to housing, poverty, neighborhood revitalization, and racial discrimination.” A graphic to illustrate the interconnections is showing sustainability as a Venn diagram with three overlapping circles—one for each dimension. This is certainly the prevailing conceptual model and is used by Dubuque to illustrate the components of its program.²⁶

The interconnections are stressed by this approach such as training for the underemployed in green jobs to expand employment opportunities, improve the economy, and clean up the environment. Fort Collins has created an integrated administrative framework for its efforts in the areas of economic, environmental, and social sustainability. Ann Arbor approved a sustainability



²⁴ A similar approach is to measure results in the three dimensions—the “triple-bottom line” method—although the lack of attention to metrics means that bottom lines are not being measured in most communities.

²⁵ Jessica Chapman, “Social Equity: The Forgotten Leg of Sustainability” http://www.sustainablecitynetwork.com/topic_channels/policy/article_608299f0-8eb5-11e3-9837-0017a43b2370.html?utm_source=SCN+InBox+e-Newsletter&utm_campaign=9992432976-Newsletter_2-5-2014_Muni&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_11e7ac761c-9992432976-170640569.

²⁶ *Creating an International Model for Sustainability*. <http://www.cityofdubuque.org/DocumentCenter/Home/View/2702>

framework in 2013 with elements that go beyond the three dimensional approach. The elements in its framework are climate and energy, community (which includes economic vitality), land use and access, and resource management. For some communities, this approach with explicit emphasis on the three “e’s” will be the preferred rationale for its sustainability program.

The other case study communities do not present their wide-ranging activities related to sustainability in an integrated framework. It appears that a different approach is needed to explain what sustainability means and what it will include. To be clear, this is a different way of articulating a commitment to sustainability—not a change in the content of what sustainability means. Another approach is to think of the dimensions as concentric circles.

In this graphic, the economy is viewed as “nested” in the social dimension, and all human activities are affected by and in turn impact the condition of the environment. Melissa McCullough, Senior Sustainability Advisor in the Sustainable and Healthy Communities Research Program for EPA in Research Triangle Park, expressed the relationships this way in an assessment she did while on detail working with the Durham Sustainability Office:



Another consideration is that the three “legs” of sustainability are not so much equal, as nested. The economy of any given place cannot exist without a stable society around it. Durham has seen that in the past as crime, or the perception of a crime problem, adversely affected our economy. And there is much more to a society than the economy; there are relationships, culture, norms, place, language and much more. This is recognized in Durham’s plans, in the desire to maintain our sense of place and history. Similarly, a society exists within, and depends on, its environment. A sense of place arises first from its natural context.²⁷

In this view, the social dimension is not optional or only partially linked to the other dimensions. It is the essential setting for economic activity, just as the economic and social dimensions are nested in the environment. For economies to thrive all must participate. Environmental enhancement supports social and economic activity and depends on the contributions of all segments of the population.

²⁷ Mellissa McCullough, “Sustainable Durham City and County: How Durham’s goals, strategies and plans weave into a sustainability construct, and where gaps endanger a Sustainable Durham,” Paper prepared for City/County of Durham Sustainability Office, 2011.

Defining Livability and Viability in the Sustainability Context

The challenge in expanding actions to promote sustainability is to create a broad rationale that can be easily understood and related to other community goals. When interviewing local government officials, it is very common to be asked the question—what do you mean by sustainability? All of the case study jurisdictions have active agendas that include a wide range of the activities associated with the three dimensions of sustainability, but they differ in the extent to which they explain and organize these activities under the banner of sustainability. Three of the case study communities had a clear, integrated approach to sustainability, but the common underlying purpose across all of these communities is that they are promoting livability and viability. When identifying the components of sustainability at the community level, it may be helpful to identify these qualities as the underlying objectives of a comprehensive approach to sustainability.²⁸ Livability by itself has a present orientation that must be balanced with the long-term perspective of viability. For example, Portland identifies qualities it wants to foster now and over the next twenty-five years. Both qualities—livability and viability—necessarily have economic, social, and environmental aspects. It is possible that this definition of sustainability may resonate in a wider array of communities: sustainability is a commitment to improving the livability of our community for all its residents and to strengthening the viability of our community for all who will live here in the future.

Livability is central to the definition of sustainability developed by HUD, DOT, and EPA working together under the Partnership for Sustainable Communities. It should be available for everyone in a locality. Thus livability presumes equity as well as economic opportunity and a supportive environment.

Viability means being capable of normal growth and development. A city or county, like an organism, does not achieve normal growth and development when some of its parts are not healthy, not functioning fully, or deprived of essentials so that another part of the organism can succeed. Since World War II, various forms of disconnected social and economic processes have emerged in American urban areas. They are examples of incomplete development. Racial segregation based on laws and social restrictions was replaced by residential segregation and the increasing physical separation of races between suburbs and central cities. Economic development benefitted the majority of the population, but left others behind and shifted some of the costs of production, such as pollution, to low-income areas. These practices are not sustainable because they deny livable conditions to many and they undermine viability. Urban areas with empty centers did not thrive although residents of outlying areas could try to ignore the areas that were falling behind. Now many young professionals as well as retirees have returned to the community centers, and social interdependence is unmistakable. Just as we have recognized that economic strategies that destroy the environment by pollution or exhausting scarce resources weaken long-term economic viability, it

²⁸ Dubuque uses these terms in its graphic to summarize the approach to sustainability. Using a Venn diagram, it includes “livability” in the overlap between economic prosperity and social/cultural vibrancy and “viability” in the overlap between environmental integrity and economic prosperity. In addition, it uses “equitable” in the overlap between social/cultural vibrancy and economic prosperity. The program affirms that “Dubuque is a viable, livable, and equitable community.” This is a worthwhile approach. It is also possible to argue that equity along with other dimensions of sustainability is essential to both livability and viability. That is the approach taken in this report.

is clear that practices that exploit or ignore disadvantaged members of our communities and harm their quality of life are not viable either.

The orientation to sustainability in Fort Collins indicates that comprehensive strategies to promote livability and viability do not need to be justified in negative terms, i.e., how the absence of a factor limits the prospects of success. The Fort Collins approach, according to Josh Birks, Fort Collins economic health director, is based on the belief that working collaboratively can increase and improve outcomes for everyone; essentially, through the shared efforts of the environmental services, economic health, and social sustainability departments, sustainability becomes a means of improving quality of life for every member of the community now and in the future. City Manager Darin Atteberry suggests that “net-zero” is an acceptable goal for reducing greenhouse gas emissions, but “net-positive” is more exciting and desirable for all aspects of sustainability.²⁹ The definition of sustainability in Fort Collins, like its organizational structure, is unified while recognizing its three essential dimensions: “To systematically, creatively, and thoughtfully use environmental, human, and economic resources to meet our present needs and those of future generations without compromising the ecosystems on which we depend.” This definition clearly encompasses livability and viability.

Arlington illustrates the focus on livability and viability in its multi-faceted approach to sustainability. In its vision, “Arlington will be a diverse and inclusive world-class urban community with secure, attractive residential and commercial neighborhoods where people unite to form a caring, learning, participating, sustainable community in which each person is important.” Thus livability is central, and the county wants to be viable into the future. The social equity dimension is captured in the goal to “fund services that protect the health and safety of our residents, continue our investments in affordable housing and environmental sustainability, adequately support the public schools, and ensure a safety net for those in need.”³⁰ It seeks to “rethink the way it uses, generates, and distributes energy” and reduce Arlington’s greenhouse gas emissions by approximately 75% from 2007 baseline levels.³¹ Arlington’s long-term commitment to “smart growth” includes transit-oriented and mixed-use development with emphasis on access, reduced automobile use, and affordable housing; and it explicitly links these qualities to its economic development strategy. It places emphasis on wellness and vibrancy.

Applying Livability and Viability Rationale to Communities with Limited Current Activities

The discussion of how sustainability is conceptualized and the rationale for including social equity has been based on the actions of the case study governments and other leaders in sustainability. As noted earlier in the report, there is an important difference between governments that made a strong commitment to social equity as part of (or along with) an active sustainability program and the

²⁹ Lewiston as well presents its efforts in positive terms. In a webinar on February 21, 2014, Phil Nadeau, Lewiston Deputy City Administrator, stated that the inclusion of new immigrants is central to the revitalization of the city.

³⁰ County Board, “FY 2014 Budget Guidance Direction to Manager for Preparation of FY 2014 Budget,” <http://www.arlingtonva.us/departments/CountyBoard/Documents/FY%202014%20BUDGET%20GUIDANCE%20DIRECTION%20TO%20MANAGER%20FOR%20PREPARATION%20OF%20FY%202014%20BUDGET.aspx>.

³¹ Arlington County, *Community Energy Plan* (June 2013), <http://freshaireva.us/wp-content/uploads/2013/07/Arlingtons-Community-Energy-Plan.pdf>.

control group of governments active in sustainability areas other than equity. The low-equity group has fewer minorities, fewer persons in poverty, and fewer persons with lower education. Expressed simply, the attitude may be if a locality doesn't have poor or minority families and individuals, why worry about the social dimension? It is important to examine the reasons for including social equity in communities like these. The first response is that these governments have significant disadvantaged populations even though at lower rates than the high-equity governments. For example, the average percent of persons in poverty in the two groups of governments was 17% in communities with a strong commitment to social equity and 12% in the comparison group. Clearly, there are groups in these localities that would benefit from equity measures and would contribute to the overall sustainability plans of these governments. Furthermore, analysis of census data over time indicates the ever greater dispersion of minority groups and the poor. Without attention to equity, current residents may be forced out of the community. Arlington County makes a strong commitment to expanding affordable housing to keep the rising cost of housing from undermining the diversity of the population.

Ignoring equity represents a failure to meet needs of non-residents that are already involved in communities but are unable to fully participate in it. Communities with prosperous residents may employ large numbers of persons in low- and modest-income jobs who cannot afford to live where they work. Not only are housing options for moderate-income job holders in short supply, inaction contributes to other sustainability problems, most obviously long-distance commuting with increased energy consumption and cost to the commuters but also the loss of time for family or personal wellness activities. Even though a community may be prosperous in the present, its economic viability is threatened when it is not an attractive place to live for the teachers, police officers, service workers, and consumers that the community wants to attract. There are equity spillover effects in other communities from ignoring or excluding the disadvantaged, such as excessive concentrations of low income persons or homeless in some localities because of the refusal of other jurisdictions to accommodate them within their boundaries. Sustainability must be a shared effort pursued beyond narrow boundaries. Livability and viability need to be examined on a regional basis, as well as within each separate jurisdiction.

In conclusion, there are several different ways to explain and justify a commitment to sustainability that includes social equity. The livability and viability of communities depends on a strong economy, inclusive society, and sound environment. Equity is essential for a livable present and a viable future. Each community needs to find the rationale and goals that best match its values and engage the community in pursuing steps to advance livability and viability for all.

The federal government has made significant progress in defining and advancing sustainability through the Partnership for Sustainable Communities. The activities it has promoted explore linkages between components of sustainability. Its livability principles encourage communities to approach sustainability as a multifaceted strategy. There is clearly recognition as environmental justice and equitable development in the work of the Partnership.³² However, the opportunity exists

³² For example, Partnership for Sustainable Communities, "Supporting Environmental Justice and Equitable Development," December, 2010.

to establish a comprehensive and integrated definition of sustainability. The livability principles have not yet fully developed sustainability's social dimension. Equity is mentioned explicitly in regard to affordable housing and commitment to equity is implied in supporting all existing neighborhoods. Still, there is no mention of human development (except the general reference to accessing services and facilities), inclusion of all groups, citizen participation, health and vitality of people (as opposed to healthy neighborhoods), and connection to new technology. Additionally, a reference to long-term viability may further align the livability principles with the goal of sustainability over time. On the website of the Partnership for Sustainable Communities, the short answer to the question "what are sustainable communities?" is as follows:

In sustainable communities, people can live closer to jobs or have easier access to more jobs in a wider region thanks to public transit. Sustainable communities include a variety of housing types near workplaces, schools, parks, stores, and amenities, making it convenient to walk, bike, take transit, or drive short distances to daily destinations.

The emphasis is on access through a variety of transportation options, along with location of housing. This definition provides no explicit mention of other features related to equity, environment, or economy, potentially limiting the scope of activities associated with achieving greater social sustainability.

The elements identified in the 2013 EPA report entitled "Creating Equitable, Healthy, and Sustainable Communities," add certain features missing from the livability principles: meaningful community engagement, public health and a clean and safe environment, access to opportunities and daily necessities, and preservation of the features that make a community distinctive.³³ The overall approach in this report; however, prompts the same question that has been raised examining local programs. Are "equitable, healthy, and sustainable communities" unified or separate goals? While this report encourages the integration of strategies that bring together smart growth, environmental justice, and equitable development principles to "build healthy, sustainable, and inclusive communities," there is no discussion in the report of sustainability as an overarching concept.

Sustainability is a complex concept with multiple dimensions. Each community must examine its own circumstances and future prospects to determine which aspects of sustainability will be targeted for action. It is clear that some aspects of sustainability may not be relevant in a particular community, but the assessment of need and the review of possible initiatives should take consider the full scope of sustainability. As local governments look to the Partnership for Sustainable Communities for guidance, it is important that they find a comprehensive definition that encourages a broad examination of how they can create a prosperous, healthy, and inclusive community now and in the future. In the Partnership, attention should be given to expanding the livability principles and to more clearly articulating a definition of sustainability that includes these elements: sustainability is a commitment to improving the livability of the community for all its residents and to strengthening the social, economic, and environmental viability of the community for all who will live there in the future.

³³ The report does not refer explicitly to the principles of livability.

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APPENDIX A: 2012 ICMA SOCIAL EQUITY SURVEY SUMMARY

APPENDIX A:

2012 ICMA Social Equity Survey Summary

Social Equity in Local Government Sustainability Policies and Programs, 2012

The focus of the survey on Social Equity in Local Government Sustainability Policies and Programs was to collect additional information from governments with responses to ICMA's 2010 Survey of Local Government Sustainability Programs and Practices that showed they had adopted a high level of sustainability activities targeted toward social equity, particularly focusing on lower-income groups. Additionally, data was collected from a control group of local governments who responded to the 2010 survey that have similar overall ratings in sustainability, but have not incorporated social equity actions.

The electronic survey was sent to 300 local governments. They had the option to complete the survey online or to print out and complete a PDF of the survey and return it to ICMA. The respondents are divided in two comparison groups coded 2 for high sustainability, equity adopters and 1 for high sustainability, low equity.

Of the 300 localities that received the survey, 100 were in "group 1," and 200 were in "group 2." The response was 34% for group 1 (34 respondents) and 34% for group 2 (68 respondents).

Survey Highlights

Overall, in each section of the survey the group 2 respondents showed higher percentages reporting equity-related activities than did the respondents in group 1. In many instances the differences are pronounced.

Policy Issues and Actions

For the eight policy issues covered in the survey, respondents were asked to identify the extent to which each is a priority. When "priority" and "high priority" are combined, the percentage of "high equity" (code 2) reporting is noticeably higher for each issue. The only instance in which the percentages of the two groups are close is for neighborhood security, which shows 49% of code 1 respondents indicating it is a "high priority," and 52% of code 2 reporting a "high priority."

When asked which of 11 actions they had taken related to sustainability--energy conservation, resilience, climate change, emissions reduction, or similar concerns--noticeably higher percentages of code 2 (high equity) localities reported taking action in all but three instances:

- Adoption by the governing body of a resolution stating policy goals was reported by 70% of code 1 respondents, and by 68% of code 2.
- 52% of code 1 respondents indicated that they had appointed a citizens committee or task force related to sustainability concerns, compared with 46% of code 2.

Yet, when asked of the locality had created sustainability initiatives in low-income neighborhoods, only 6% of code 1 localities reported, compared with 36% of code 2. Likewise, when asked if the sustainability policy includes a social dimension, only 7% of code 1 places with a policy reported a social dimension, compared with 37% of code 2 localities.

Citizen Involvement

The first citizen involvement question asked whether the local government had sought input from the following groups regarding the development of their sustainability activities:

- Minority citizens/residents
- Low-income citizens/residents
- Disabled citizens/residents
- Senior citizens/residents
- Youth

In each case, 50% or more of the code 1 respondents indicated that they had not sought input from these groups. In each case but one, a majority of code 2 respondents reported that they had sought input from these groups. The exception is minority citizens/residents, in which 48% reported that they had sought input.

The code 2 groups also showed the highest level of involvement from these groups.

Method of Seeking Input

In each type of method reported, the respondents in code 2 group show higher percentage reporting use of the method. One of the most interesting variations in percentages reporting is in response to the method "Focus groups were held to discuss issues in depth." Only 4% of the code 1 group reported this method, compared to 96% of code 2.

Community Support for Social Equity

Overall, the code 2 respondents show higher percentages reporting support from various groups than do those of the code 1 group. A majority in both code groups show support from “faith-based groups.” Real estate developers and homeowners associations are reported to have some opposition, but the percentages are small.

Environmental Actions

Perhaps the most visible difference in responses is shown for the two questions related to greenhouse gas reduction targets related to

- Specific neighborhoods
- Multi-family residences
- Single-family residences in low-income neighborhoods

Not one of the code 1 respondents indicated that the local government has established those targets, compared with 100% of the code 2 respondents.

Recycling

The responses from both groups are relatively similar. But when participation in recycling programs in low-income neighborhoods and in minority neighborhoods is compared with recycling participation in other parts of the community, the percentages reporting that it is the same level are higher in code 2 local governments.

Programs to Reduce Energy Consumption

Noticeably higher percentages of code 2 localities report energy reduction programs than do the code 1 local governments. Generally the number of low-moderate income residences that have used programs to reduce energy consumption is higher in code 2 local governments, which reflects the higher percentage that offer these programs. An average of 556 residences have taken advantage of heating and air conditioning upgrades in code 2 localities, compared with an average of 78 in code 1, in which only 9% reporting offering the program.

Transportation

Higher percentages of code 2 local governments have bus service and also plan to expand existing bus service. Of those that do not have bus service, 88% of code 2 localities plan to create bus service, compared with 13% of code 1.

Transportation Improvements

Respondents in both groups reported expanded dedicated bikes lanes on streets, adding bike and walking

trails, and expanded bus routes. Yet, when asked if these improvements were expanded in low-income and minority neighborhoods, the percentages reporting affirmatively are much higher in the code 2 local governments.

The percentages reporting that they have established other transportation programs targeted to low-income citizens/residents, disabled citizens/residents, and senior citizens/residents are much closer for both groups.

Jobs and Income Security

Again, the percentages of code 2 localities that have taken action are higher than those in the code 1 group. An interesting difference is that 38% of the code 2 respondents indicate that contractors with their local government are required to provide a living wage, whereas only 9% in the code 1 group report that requirement. Neither group shows more than 5% requiring that contractors provide health insurance.

Housing

Higher percentages of code 2 local governments require that new housing developments have a certain percentage devoted to affordable housing for low-income residents (24% compared with 40%). Sixty percent of code 2 localities offer incentives for including affordable housing for low-income residents in new housing developments, compared with 22% in the code 1 group.

Social Inclusion Programs

The proportion of local governments in the code 1 group reporting that they do not offer the programs is higher than that of the code 2 group. The programs included internet access, technology skill training, funding for pre-school, after school programs, education on organic farming, and a report on community quality of life indicators.

Summary

The code 2 respondents, those with high equity scores on the first survey, showed higher scores than the control groups on this survey. These communities demonstrate progress in and commitment to addressing the social equity component of sustainability. It is from this group that case studies will be developed.

The following section shows a summary of responses to each question.

In each of the tables below, the column with HS, LE and HS, HE refers to the code groups. HS represents high sustainability; LE represents low equity, and HE represents high equity.

Policy Issues and Actions

1. To what extent are the following a priority in your jurisdiction? *(Select only one.)*

Policy issues	1=HS, LE 2=HS, HE	Not a priority (%)	Somewhat a priority (%)	Priority (%)	High Priority (%)
a. Job creation	1	6	28	22	44
	2	3	14	27	56
b. Environmental justice for all groups (actions to address past and prevent future injustices)	1	34	47	19	0
	2	19	33	33	15
c. Community health and wellness	1	6	25	44	25
	2	2	16	49	34
d. Neighborhood security	1	3	9	39	49
	2	0	19	29	52
e. Household energy conservation for all income groups	1	22	38	28	13
	2	3	23	36	38
f. Housing for all income groups	1	13	34	44	9
	2	3	23	36	38
g. Public transit to/from all parts of the community	1	6	47	34	13
	2	12	18	41	29
h. Availability of fresh foods in all neighborhoods	1	42	29	23	7
	2	28	32	24	16

2. Please indicate which of the following actions your locality has taken related to sustainability, energy conservation, resilience, climate change, emissions reductions, or similar concerns in your community. (Select only one.)

Action	1=HS, LE		Not sure	
	2=HS, HE	Yes (%)	No (%)	(%)
a. Adoption by the governing body of a resolution stating policy goals.	1	70	30	0
	2	68	30	2
b. If yes, does the resolution include social equity goals? (Note: These percentages are based on the number that answered "yes" in "a" above.)	1	17	74	9
	2	40	42	18
c. Adoption by the governing body of a plan with specific targets or benchmarks.	1	39	61	0
	2	58	41	2
d. If yes, are there targets or benchmarks related to social equity? (Note: These percentages are based on the number that answered "yes" in "c" above.)	1	15	69	15
	2	38	46	16
e. Establishment of a sustainability policy and/or plan by the city or county manager or CAO.	1	42	58	0
	2	64	33	3
f. If yes, does the policy or plan include a social equity dimension? (Note: These percentages are based on the number that answered "yes" in "e" above.)	1	7	71	21
	2	37	54	9
g. Appointment of a citizens committee, commission, or task force related to sustainability concerns.	1	52	49	0
	2	46	54	0
h. If yes, are there representatives from low-income and minority groups? (Note: These percentages are based on the number that answered "yes" in "g" above.)	1	35	41	24
	2	39	36	26
i. Created sustainability initiatives in low-income neighborhoods	1	6	88	6
	2	36	62	2
j. Developed partnerships with organizations that include or target low-income groups.	1	52	46	3
	2	65	32	3
k. Staff specifically dedicated to the sustainability effort.	1	36	61	3
	2	63	36	2

3. If your local government has staff specifically dedicated to the sustainability effort, how many FTEs work on sustainability?

An average of 1 for code 1 respondents; and average of 4 for code 2 respondents

4. Since 2010 has the number of FTEs

1. Remained the same

Code 1 = 58%; Code 2 = 50%

2. Increased

Code 1 = 21%; Code 2 = 27%

3. Decreased

Code 1 = 21%; Code 2 = 23%

Citizen Involvement

5. Has your government sought input from any of the following groups regarding the development of your sustainability activities? (Note: the level of involvement was calculated separately from whether or not the local government had sought input. It is not based on the answer to whether input was sought.)

Group	1=HS, LE 2=HS, HE		Yes (%)	No (%)	Don't know (%)		None (%)	Low involvement (%)	Moderate involvement (%)	High involvement (%)	Very high involvement (%)
a. Minority citizens/residents	1	21	61	18	0	80	20	0	0		
	2	48	34	19	0	45	41	14	0		
b. Low-income citizens/residents	1	27	60	13	0	57	43	0	0		
	2	57	32	11	6	27	53	12	3		
c. Disabled citizens/residents	1	14	69	17	0	1	0	0	0		
	2	50	39	11	0	0	0	0	0		
d. Senior citizens/residents	1	40	50	10	0	9	22	0	0		
	2	56	34	9	3	22	40	31	3		
e. Youth	1	28	62	10	0	22	56	11	11		
	2	52	32	15	0	50	28	16	1		

6. If input was sought from any of the groups in question 5, please indicate which methods were used? (Check all applicable.)

Method	1=HS, LE 2=HS, HE	Method was used (%)
a. Input solicited online	1	25
	2	75
b. Meetings were held where community members could provide input	1	24
	2	76
c. Spokespersons from one or more of these groups were invited to give presentations at city/county meetings	1	11
	2	89
d. Focus groups were held to discuss issues in depth	1	4
	2	96
e. Community members were appointed to an advisory board or commission	1	29
	2	71
f. Other (Please describe: _____)	1	33
	2	67

Under "other," one person wrote in "neighborhood meetings; another wrote in "public outreach to groups."

7. To what extent do the following individuals or groups support or oppose efforts by your government to address social equity concerns such as affordable housing, transportation for low-income individuals, daycare, education services, and social services? (Select only one.)

Individuals/groups	1=HS, LE 2=HS, HE	Strongly oppose	Moderately oppose	Groups divided on the issue	Moderately support	Strongly support	Group has no position or there is no group
a. General public	1	3	3	16	38	19	0
	2	2	2	24	41	24	0
b. Chamber of Commerce/ business associations	1	0	10	10	39	7	36
	2	0	5	14	53	16	13
c. Neighborhood organizations	1	0	3	10	36	13	0
	2	3	0	18	34	24	0
d. Environmental groups	1	0	3	10	29	19	39
	2	0	0	5	33	41	22
e. Real estate developers	1	0	7	23	23	0	48
	2	0	14	19	43	5	19
f. Faith-based groups	1	0	0	0	29	42	29
	2	0	3	3	33	48	13
g. Civil rights groups	1	0	0	3	16	23	58
	2	0	0	3	25	35	37
h. Social entrepreneurs	1	0	0	3	16	23	58
	2	0	0	10	25	35	37
i. Homeowner Associations	1	0	13	16	19	0	0
	2	2	6	24	29	3	0
j. Large business corporations	1	0	0	23	13	3	61
	2	1	0	16	36	5	42
k. Small businesses	1	0	7	23	23	7	0
	2	2	5	19	31	13	0
l. The media	1	0	0	13	40	7	40
	2	0	5	11	40	13	32
m. Labor unions	1	0	0	3	27	0	70
	2	0	2	7	33	8	51
n. City or County Council/ Commission	1	0	3	32	31	31	13
	2	0	0	17	31	46	7
o. Economic Development/ Planning Depts.	1	0	0	3	34	34	25
	2	0	0	0	42	40	15

8. Can specific individuals or organizations be identified as actively encouraging the city or county to become involved in efforts to promote social equity?

Yes

Code 1 = 42%; Code 2 = 65%

No

Code 1 = 58%; Code 2 = 35%

9. If "yes," which individuals or organizations? (Check all applicable.)

	1=HS, LE 2=HS, HE	Can be identified (%)
a. Key members of the public	1	20
	2	80
b. Local environmental or similar issue-focused groups	1	21
	2	79
c. Elected official(s)	1	22
	2	78
d. City or county staff	1	25
	2	75
e. Other (Please describe: _____)	1	
	2	

10. Please indicate which of the following your local government has established related to the environment. (Check all applicable.)

Action	1=HS, LE 2=HS, HE	Local government has established (%)
a. Baseline greenhouse gas emissions of the community	1	31
	2	69
b. Greenhouse gas reduction targets for specific neighborhoods	1	0
	2	100
c. Greenhouse gas reduction targets for multi-family residences	1	0
	2	100
d. Greenhouse gas reduction targets for single-family residences in low-income neighborhoods	1	0
	2	100
e. Measures initiated by your local government to reduce dust and particulate matter in the air	1	22
	2	78
f. Plan for tree preservation and planting in low-income neighborhoods	1	24
	2	76

Citizen Involvement

11. Please indicate which of the following programs your local government has in place. (Select only one.)

Program	1=HS, LE 2=HS, HE	Yes, has in place (%)	No, not in place (%)
a. Community-wide recycling collection program for paper and plastic and glass for residential properties	1	94	6
	2	89	11
b. Community-wide recycling collection program for household hazardous waste	1	76	24
	2	91	9
c. Community-wide recycling collection program for household electronic equipment (e-waste)	1	78	22
	2	83	17
d. Community-wide collection of organic material for composting	1	50	50
	2	54	46

12. For each of the programs that your local government has in place, please indicate which best describes the level of participation in low-income neighborhoods compared with other parts of the community. (Select only one.)

	1=HS, LE 2=HS, HE	Greater participation (%)	Same participation (%)	Less participation (%)	Don't know participation (%)
a. Community-wide recycling collection program for paper <u>and</u> plastic <u>and</u> glass for residential properties	1	0	50	21	29
	2	3	52	20	25
b. Community-wide recycling collection program for household hazardous waste	1	0	30	12	58
	2	0	44	16	41
c. Community-wide recycling collection program for household electronic equipment (e-waste)	1	0	33	9	58
	2	0	43	17	40
d. Community-wide collection of organic material for composting	1	3	33	10	53
	2	0	39	12	50

13. For each of the programs that your local government has in place, please indicate which best describes the level of participation in minority neighborhoods compared with other parts of the community. (Select only one.)

	1=HS, LE 2=HS, HE	Greater participation (%)	Same participation (%)	Less participation (%)	Don't know participation (%)
a. Community-wide recycling collection program for paper <u>and</u> plastic <u>and</u> glass for residential properties	1	0	36	18	46
	2	0	48	21	31
b. Community-wide recycling collection program for household hazardous waste	1	0	25	6	69
	2	0	41	12	48
c. Community-wide recycling collection program for household electronic equipment (e-waste)	1	0	25	6	69
	2	0	44	12	44
d. Community-wide collection of organic material for composting	1	0	30	7	63
	2	0	42	8	50

14. Please indicate which of the following programs are in place in your local government to reduce energy consumption in the community. (Note: Because respondents could check more than one financing method, the total percentages exceed 100% in some cases. In other cases the respondents reported a program but did not report the financing method, so the total percentages are less than 100%.)

	1=HS,LE 2=HS, HE	Number reporting program in place (A)	Financing- direct grant (% of A)	Financing- direct loan (% of A)	Financing- tax incentive (% of A)
a. Energy Audit-Individual residences	1	12	42	17	0
	2	36	33	14	3
b. Weatherization- Individual residences	1	13	62	31	15
	2	42	48	12	10
c. Heating / air conditioning upgrades- Individual residences	1	9	56	44	22
	2	29	31	41	14
d. Purchase of energy-efficient appliances- Individual residences	1	8	38	13	0
	2	20	35	15	10
e. Installation of solar equipment- Individual residences	1	6	33	17	33
	2	18	22	33	22

Actions in Low-Income and Minority Neighborhoods

15. For actions being taken, please indicate the approximate number of residences with low- and moderate-income residents that have used the program.

Action	Average number of low-moderate income residences that have used the program
a. Energy Audit— Individual residences	Code 1 = 450 Code 2 = 296
b. Weatherization— Individual residences	Code 1 = 254 Code 2 = 292
c. Heating/air conditioning upgrades— Individual residences	Code 1 = 78 Code 2 = 556
d. Purchase of energy-efficient appliances— Individual residences	Code 1 = 13 Code 2 = 326
e. Installation of solar equipment— Individual residences	Code 1 = 9 Code 2 = 68

16. Has your local government established any other energy reduction programs targeted specifically to assist low- and moderate-income residents?

Yes

Code 1 = 13%; Code 2 = 87%

No

Code 1 = 18%; Code 2 = 83%

17. If “yes,” please describe the program(s) in the space below.

- The City offers an Energy Efficiency Incentive program whereby reduced building fees are offer for solar window installation and residential window installations.
- Our Residential Rehabilitation Loan Program, funded through HUD, includes weatherization and other energy efficiency upgrades as allowable improvements for qualified low-income applicants.
- Rebate on water & energy saving appliances
- The city funds an agency which provides low interest loans for rehab of homes that includes weatherization.
- In partnership with habitat for humanity we have assisted in the building of 4 energy efficient homes.
- The City has partnered with Florida Power & Light in the past two years to conduct a Home Energy Makeover Initiative (HEMI) that provides an energy audit and retrofit including attic insulation, light bulbs, a/c filters, and water conservation fixtures.
- Several local governments reported weatherization programs for public housing as well as homes in general. One locality used ARRA funds for this purpose.
- Energy works KC, funded thru USDOE Better Buildings Program, has targeted low and moderate income neighborhoods with financial assistance & incentives to make energy efficiency improvement in their homes.

18. Please indicate whether your local government has taken any of the following actions in low-income and/or minority neighborhoods. (The percentage calculations are based on 34 code 1 responses to the survey and 68 code 2 responses to the survey.)

Individuals/groups	1=HS, LE 2=HS, HE	Local government has taken action in <u>low-income</u> neighborhood (%)	Local government has taken action in <u>minority</u> neighborhood (%)
a. Community wellness programs	1	15	15
	2	41	41
b. Provide facilities to receive social services	1	18	18
	2	56	38
c. Provide transportation from neighborhood to receive social services	1	29	26
	2	57	40
d. Provide facilities to receive medical services	1	9	12
	2	47	34
e. Library located in neighborhood open during normal work hours	1	32	35
	2	62	37
f. Library located in neighborhood open in the evenings after normal work hours	1	29	26
	2	58	40
g. Efforts to promote security such as community watch	1	34	29
	2	60	51
h. Programs to reduce blight and graffiti	1	26	21
	2	62	46
i. Linkages between neighborhood residents and law enforcement such as community policing	1	47	38
	2	65	51
j. Provided space and supported the development of community gardens	1	32	31
	2	59	44
k. Provided space for farmers markets	1	24	24
	2	47	32
l. An active brownfields, vacant property, or other program for revitalizing abandoned or underutilized residential, commercial or industrial lands and buildings	1	15	18
	2	31	26
m. Other actions to rectify toxic air, water, or land pollution	1	3	9
	2	21	18
n. A land conservation program	1	3	9
	2	29	18

Transportation

19. Does your community have bus service?

Yes

Code 1 = 82%; Code 2 = 94%

No

Code 1 = 18%; Code 2 = 7%

20. If "yes," does your community plan to expand the bus service?

Yes

Code 1 = 52%; Code 2 = 64%

No

Code 1 = 49%; Code 2 = 36%

21. If "no," does your community plan to create bus service?

Yes

Code 1 = 13%; Code 2 = 88%

No

Code 1 = 22%; Code 2 = 78%

22. Within the last 5 years, which of the following transportation improvements has your local government implemented?

Transportation improvements	1=HS,LE		Yes (%)	No (%)	Don't know (%)
	2=HS, HE				
a. Expanded dedicated bike lanes on streets	1		81	19	0
	2		83	16	2
b. If "yes," were bike lanes expanded in low-income and minority neighborhoods? (Note: These percentages are based on the number that answered "yes" in "a" above.)	1		61	9	30
	2		74	11	15
c. Added biking and walking trails	1		90	10	0
	2		77	20	3
d. If "yes," were biking and hiking trails expanded in low-income and minority neighborhoods? (Note: These percentages are based on the number that answered "yes" in "c" above.)	1		50	18	32
	2		76	10	14
e. Expanded bus routes	1		50	46	4
	2		61	30	9
f. If "yes," do expanded bus routes increase access for residents of low-income and minority neighborhoods? (Note: These percentages are based on the number that answered "yes" in "e" above.)	1		75	8	17
	2		95	0	5
g. Increased transportation assistance for individuals with disabilities, such as paratransit.	1		61	29	11
	2		54	30	16

23. Has your local government established any other transportation programs targeted specifically to assist the following groups?

Group	1=HS,LE		Yes, targeted transportation program (%)	No targeted transportation program (%)
	2=HS, HE			
a. Low-income citizens/residents	1		46	54
	2		44	56
b. Disabled citizens/residents	1		56	44
	2		62	38
c. Senior citizens/residents	1		59	41
	2		67	33

24. Please describe any transportation programs your local government has established that are targeted to assist the groups above.
- Medical transit
 - Paratransit
 - Dial-a-ride
 - 80 years and older ride free
 - The City has two trolley routes that connect the CBD to the commuter rail line station and the low-income areas around the CBD. One of the lines is to be expanded to into one of the low-income areas connecting this smaller business center to the CBD.
 - Through Social Services, Catawba County runs Medicaid transportation services to qualified residents. Case workers provide transportation to individual clients in each of the categories outlined above.
 - Special transit services subsidies for drivers in very rural areas to take low income/disabled/seniors to medical appts.
 - Seniors are allowed to the local Arlington Transit bus service (ART) at 50% reduced fare and disabled individuals who qualify for paratransit ride free. Department of Human Services provides bus tokens to low income clients to keep appointments.
 - Door-to-Door van service for these populations.
25. Does your local government have a program to assist low- and moderate-income persons in improving the fuel efficiency and reducing pollution from their vehicles?
- Yes
Code 1 = 3%; Code 2 = 2%
- No
Code 1 = 97%; Code 2 = 98%
26. If “yes,” please describe the programs that have been established.
- The only comment provided was about a program that is available to all residents.

Jobs and Income Security

27. Has your local government taken any of the following actions related to jobs, housing, and income security? (Select only one.)

Job creation	1=HS,LE	Yes (%)	No (%)	Don't know (%)
	2=HS, HE			
a. Actions to promote job creation	1	62	38	0
	2	88	11	2
b. If yes, have actions included development of “green jobs” (Note: These percentages are based on the number that answered “yes” in “a” above.)	1	33	52	14
	2	64	27	9
c. Training and workforce development	1	42	58	0
	2	72	23	5
d. If yes, have actions included preparation for filling “green jobs” (Note: These percentages are based on the number that answered “yes” in “b” above.)	1	36	50	14
	2	61	30	9
e. Requirement that contractors with your local government provide a living wage for employees	1	9	82	9
	2	38	53	10
f. Requirement that contractors with your local government provide health insurance for employees	1	3	87	10
	2	5	81	14

Housing

28. Has your local government taken any of the following actions related to housing? (*Select only one.*)

Action	1=HS,LE	Yes	No	Don't know
	2=HS, HE			
a. Require that new housing development have a certain percentage devoted to affordable housing for low-income residents	1	24	76	0
	2	40	57	3
b. Incentives for including affordable housing for low-income residents in new housing development.	1	22	78	0
	2	60	37	3

29. Please indicate which of the following programs your local government has in place. For each program, please indicate the extent to which your government collaborates with other organizations in your community in carrying out this action. (*Select only one.*)

	1=HS,LE	Number report- ing no rogram*	Government has program		
			2=HS, HE	Collaboration: Yes (%)	Collaboration: No (%)
a. Provide financial support/incentives for affordable housing	1	14	59	35	5
	2	17	87	7	7
b. Expand the availability of affordable housing	1	12	79	16	5
	2	18	91	7	2
c. Expand homeownership	1	14	63	25	13
	2	18	84	12	5
d. Provide supportive housing to people with disabilities	1	16	71	24	6
	2	21	68	20	13
e. Provide housing options for the elderly	1	16	71	8	7
	2	20	85	8	8
f. Provide housing within your community to homeless persons	1	16	57	29	14
	2	22	85	10	5

*Note: 34 local governments responded to the survey in the code 1 group, and 68 in the code 2 group.

30. Does your local government have other programs to create diverse, mixed-income communities?

Yes

Code 1 = 7%; Code 2 = 25%

No

Code 1 = 93%; Code 2 = 75%

31. If yes, what programs have been established?

- Mixed use housing in residential zoning districts; affordable housing incentives for distribution of affordable housing throughout community.
- Affordable housing incentives have been granted to developers via reduced building permit fees or impact fee credits.
- City's Social Services Division provides: Back-To-School Resource Fair (free school supplies, access to resources), LIHEAP/REHEAP energy assistance programs, Children's Community Clothing Closet (free children's clothing).
- An artist district was established in an up and coming low income neighborhood that provides reduced rent for live/work residences.
- Workforce housing creator in center 10,000 grant per unit, 10 year tax abatement

- Loans/grants for upper floor downtown housing development with a mix of low and market rate housing
- Several municipalities initiated redevelopment programs
- Dept of social services, community development & department of aging along with university have assorted efforts in place to assist individuals.
- Housing programs for veterans
- Financial incentive to create market rate housing in donation
- Affordable dwelling unit ordinance mixed use development ordinances
- An established urban renewal area; utilization of federal tax credit programs; development of incentives for developers

Social Inclusion

32. Please indicate which of the following programs your local government has. For each activity, please indicate the extent to which your government collaborates with other organizations in your community in carrying out this action. (Check all applicable.)

	1=HS,LE 2=HS, HE	Number report- ing no rogram*	Government has program		
			Collaboration: Yes (%)	Collaboration: No (%)	Collaboration: Don't know (%)
a. Provide access to information technology for people without connection to the internet	1	14	74	21	5
	2	12	69	20	12
b. Provide training for community members interested in improving their technology skills	1	16	63	25	13
	2	16	80	20	0
c. Provide assistance in accessing subsidies that may be available for low-income members of the community to obtain Internet access in their homes	1	25	38	38	24
	2	41	50	23	27
d. Community center for educational and recreational purposes	1	10	80	16	4
	2	5	75	22	3
e. Provide funding for pre-school education	1	24	44	56	0
	2	15	75	10	15
f. Provide after-school programs for children	1	14	84	16	0
	2	9	78	11	11
g. Provide education on organic farming	1	23	70	30	0
	2	34	68	14	18
h. Report on community quality of life indicators, such as education, cultural, diversity, and social well-being.	1	19	57	43	0
	2	20	79	12	10

*Note: 34 local governments responded to the survey in the code 1 group, and 68 in the code 2 group.

Other Actions

33. Please describe in the space below any additional programs or policies your local government has put in place that you think would be helpful to other local governments.
- In addition, the adaptive recreation contracts with the State of Arizona, division of developmental disabilities to provide adult day, summer and after school programs to individuals with a disability.
 - Community garden policy & grant program
 - Every child/every parent; project hope; dubuque works; anchibique; mult-cultural family center; sustainable dubuque; speak you peace; creator of community engagement coordinator and workforce & development ready
 - The Rockville Farmers Market established a system to accept electronic benefits transfer (EBT) cards and will match up to \$10 to provide greater access to fresh, healthy, local foods.
 - The City has seen significant immigrant population growth over the last ten years and has worked hard with a wide variety of partners to assist in assimilating this population.
 - We have several programs in conjunction with university of NC related to individual well-being for various age groups & culturally diverse populations.
 - City of Henderson is part of a regional public-private partnership called Green Chips that has received grants to complete energy audits and retrofits at homeless shelters and low-income households.

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