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COMMUNITY
INVESTMENT
TOOLKIT
VOLUME 3

CASE STUDY

Old Town Hillsboro Eco-Efficient Action Plan

In response to the shifting business landscape of the 21st century, many businesses are adopting eco-efficient strategies to gain a competitive advantage and attract an innovative, educated workforce. As the region implements the 2040 plan for growth, Metro is working to help communities increase sustained economic competitiveness and prosperity. Both local and international trends indicate that eco-efficient businesses can realize improved financial and environmental performance by choosing operations that produce more with less – less water, less energy, less capital, less land, less waste. These efficiencies are achieved through high-performance infrastructure, 21st century site design, and revitalization through redevelopment and the effective use of existing urban areas.

Metro highlighted these sustainable business strategies in the **Community Investment Toolkit: Eco-Efficient Employment** and in 2012, launched a pilot program to encourage implementation in local communities. The Eco-Efficient Pilot Program delivers long-term value by facilitating collaboration among business owners, property owners, nonprofit organizations, and various public agencies and departments. As a regional convener, Metro provides technical support in developing action plans for implementing eco-efficient strategies and helps build capacity and partnerships in local communities.

Old Town Hillsboro

The Old Town area of Hillsboro is designated as a regional employment center and characterized by a mix of industrial uses, as well as residential pockets. There is no other place in Hillsboro where such diverse activities co-exist in close proximity to each other, and adjacent to both downtown Hillsboro and Jackson Bottom Wetlands Preserve. Old Town is located within the Downtown Hillsboro Urban Renewal Area and the South Industrial and Downtown Enterprise Zones. The Downtown Framework Plan, Hillsboro 2020 Vision and Action Plan, and Downtown Urban Renewal Plan all establish a policy context for a revitalized Old Town that supports existing and new business through sustainable development. The action plan illustrates how public-private partnerships in the region can use eco-efficient strategies to build vibrant, sustainable communities. This case study summarizes the city's experiences for use by other communities who may wish to consider similar strategies.

The eco-efficient pilot program launched in Old Town Hillsboro provided the opportunity for our small business and property owners to engage and build networks, collaborate with public sector agencies, and create a shared vision for the area that can attract funding and investment that may not otherwise be available to an individual business or public agency.

– Kathryn Harrington
Metro Councilor

Nuts and bolts

► **The Eco-Efficient Pilot Program** utilizes a community driven, engagement-based framework. The pilot program enabled a consulting team to facilitate decision-making and provide technical assistance to pilot communities interested in eco-efficient strategies. The pilot plan framework acknowledges that collaboration and partnerships between public, private, institutional, and nonprofit sectors are often necessary to realize eco-efficient strategies. As a result, the framework is strongly structured around engagement and outreach to encourage interaction between various stakeholders, facilitate development of common goals and vision, and forge interactions that may develop into partnerships.

The pilot program framework includes workshops with community working groups, a preliminary feasibility assessment, and stakeholder interviews to identify strategies from Metro's Eco-Efficient Toolkit that are most viable to implement in the specific study areas. Working groups also identify proponents, partners, and stakeholders that can take the lead, and recommend a series of next steps to achieve implementation. The consulting team developed preliminary assessments to address technical feasibility of potential strategies when specifically applied to the pilot community sites. The pilot communities then developed and made a commitment to an action plan.



► **Old Town Hillsboro Business Working Group** The eco-efficient action plan was developed through a series of workshops with the Old Town Hillsboro Business Working Group comprising the Hillsboro Chamber of Commerce, the City of Hillsboro, and local businesses and property owners.

Government and other employment service organizations

Peter Brandom, Hillsboro Sustainability
 Karla Antonini, Project Manager, Hillsboro Economic Development
 Doug Miller, Hillsboro Planning
 Carrie Pak, Clean Water Services
 John Southgate, Hillsboro Area Chamber of Commerce
 Miranda Bateschell, Metro

Area business and property owners

Jaime Miranda, M&M Swap Meet
 Jim Feemster, On the Deck
 Adam Wittenberg, Hillsboro SunWest
 Gene Zurbrugg, Zurbrugg Development Co.
 Peter Van Houten, EG Metals
 Jim Collias, Zylight

Implementing eco-efficient business strategies in Old Town can help to support long-term value:

Partnerships Through the pilot program, exploratory discussions with business owners revealed a desire to consider business-to-business networks, as well as business collaboration with public sector agencies. Because Old Town includes a wide range of many smaller businesses in comparison to large lot industrial users in the north part of the city, it has the unique challenge and opportunity for a broader diversity of industry types and potential for shared infrastructure and resources. Through collaboration and networks, Old Town has the potential to articulate a shared vision, collectively address anticipated challenges, and attract or qualify for sources of funding and investment that may not be available on an individual business level or even to a public agency.

Development and operational advantages Eco-efficient strategies have the potential to streamline regulations and permitting, and reduce and improve the predictability of operational costs for Old Town businesses and property owners. These advantages are particularly important because of expected redevelopment and business expansion over the next five to fifteen years. Green buildings and infrastructure can help to reduce costs for energy, water, stormwater, and waste, increasing the competitive advantage of the area. It can also attract businesses and employees that share an environmental ethic. In particular, they can help to address stormwater and traffic challenges in Old Town. Committing to specific strategies improves predictability for potential investors and developers.

Community identity and brand Old Town Hillsboro has not always enjoyed a strong identity, yet it holds great potential to become known as a center of innovation and an incubator for and supplier of local business. Old Town businesses can help others meet their local business utilization and environmental goals. By developing a collective vision for the future of Old Town and committing to specific actions, businesses and the city can position Old Town as a unique opportunity for economic development and investment that is consistent with 21st century needs and attractive to businesses and the workforce.

Pilot community

An employment area selected by Metro to develop an eco-efficient action plan.

Lead agency The agency in a pilot community that leads the project, establishes the working group, and commits to managing implementation and measuring progress to be shared with Metro and other communities in the region.

Working group Members are actively involved in the pilot community, represent interests of constituencies or members, and commit to assisting the lead agency with implementation.



Putting it together

Innovista Eco-Industrial Park

The small town of Hinton in Alberta, Canada, created a sustainable industrial park by using an eco-industrial development checklist of 80 different guidelines including predevelopment planning, energy and water systems, parcel layout and orientation, landscaping and open space design, construction, and access and movement. City staff works one-on-one with developers in the Innovista Eco-Industrial Park to implement relevant sustainable development practices from the flexible menu guidelines (ideally 50 out of 80) and gives recognition for their efforts in adopting 21st century design standards.



► **The Old Town Hillsboro Eco-Efficient Action Plan** provides goals and criteria for sustainable business growth, and establishes stakeholder-driven priority strategies, committed leads for actions, and next steps. It is a roadmap to achieve on-the-ground implementation of triple-bottom-line projects resulting in economic, social, and ecological benefits.

► **Vision and goals** Through workshops, the working group developed the following goals for Old Town Hillsboro:

- Provide a range of traded sector services and goods through local businesses
- Support business incubation
- Employ a business network that collaborates to achieve greater operational efficiencies and development advantages
- Leverage the unique characteristics and sense of place including adjacency to downtown, transportation access with highways and rail, relatively low rents and range of available space, and a diverse mix of business and industry

► **Feasibility and assessment** The workshop process for the eco-efficient pilot program was a critical first step in convening a range of public, private, and nonprofit economic development stakeholders to discuss the future of Old Town and how to promote sustainability, vitality, and competitive advantage for the area. Through the workshops, the Old Town business working group developed a framework vision and list of challenges to overcome. The framework and stakeholder interviews were then used to evaluate the potential implementation strategies for Old Town. A survey was also developed for local businesses to test level of interest and potential commitment to different strategies as well as preferred forums for future engagement.

Through evaluation and feedback, select strategies were identified as the most viable, timely, and effective for various partners and stakeholders to pursue. They also have the greatest opportunity for and commitment to on-the-ground implementation.

	LOCAL BUSINESS SUPPORT AND INCUBATION	NETWORK FOR OPERATIONAL AND DEVELOPMENT ADVANTAGES	LEVERAGE UNIQUE SENSE OF PLACE
STUDIES & STRATEGIES		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Stormwater – regional facilities 	
PROGRAMS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Small business technical assistance ▪ Stormwater – technical assistance/ user guide 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Old Town business consortium ▪ Small business/ manufacturing directory and/or forum ▪ Waste/ byproduct exchange program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Old Town business consortium
CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ May be identified through technical assistance or business outreach 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ May be identified through studies or business consortium 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ May be identified through business consortium; refer to Old Town Community Reinvestment Strategy

Immediate actions and next steps Achieving the goals and vision for a sustainable, thriving Old Town Hillsboro relies on the partnership and collaboration of a range of stakeholders. The Old Town Hillsboro Eco-Efficient Action Plan is organized around the priority strategies, and is intended to act as a roadmap to identify next steps and timing, responsible leads and team members, and required resources. There are several actions for public, private, and nonprofit economic development partners to immediately catalyze implementation of the priority strategies for Old Town. The City of Hillsboro has committed to oversee implementation of the action plan and will report on progress periodically over the next year.

City of Hillsboro

- Review the action plan for investments that could be considered in future evaluations of the city's reinvestment strategy for this area
- Consider incorporating a sustainable business brand when capital improvements and infrastructure investments occur through signage, etc., to display physical evidence and strengthen the collective vision
- Coordinate between Public Works and Clean Water Services to begin first steps of a sub-basin stormwater approach and scope a drainage master plan for Old Town
- Hold exploratory conversations with Metro Waste Management, the Old Town Hillsboro Sustainability Program and other programs to inventory existing technical assistance available to Old Town businesses

Hillsboro Area Chamber of Commerce

- Convene a formational meeting for an Old Town business consortium with a range of businesses to ascertain interest for this group. Based on demonstration of sufficient interest, identify preferred meeting protocols and communication methods, immediate priorities for the group, outreach to other businesses, and a brand for the Old Town eco-efficient businesses
- Develop brochure of existing available networking programs
- Research best models for an online business-to-business system and test the idea of a manufacturing directory and/or networking forum for small non-retail businesses
- Communicate existing services and incentives or resources available to businesses

Business and property owner working group members

- Share information about the eco-efficient pilot program and the action plan with other businesses and property owners
- Participate in formational meeting to explore an Old Town business consortium and help to identify priorities for the group
- Reach out to other businesses who could benefit from participating
- Consider participation in a regional stormwater approach

Priority strategies

- Old Town business consortium
- Regional stormwater facilities
- Small business/manufacturing directory and/or forum
- Stormwater – technical assistance/user guide
- Waste/byproduct exchange system
- Small business technical assistance

Keep in mind

BEST Business Center

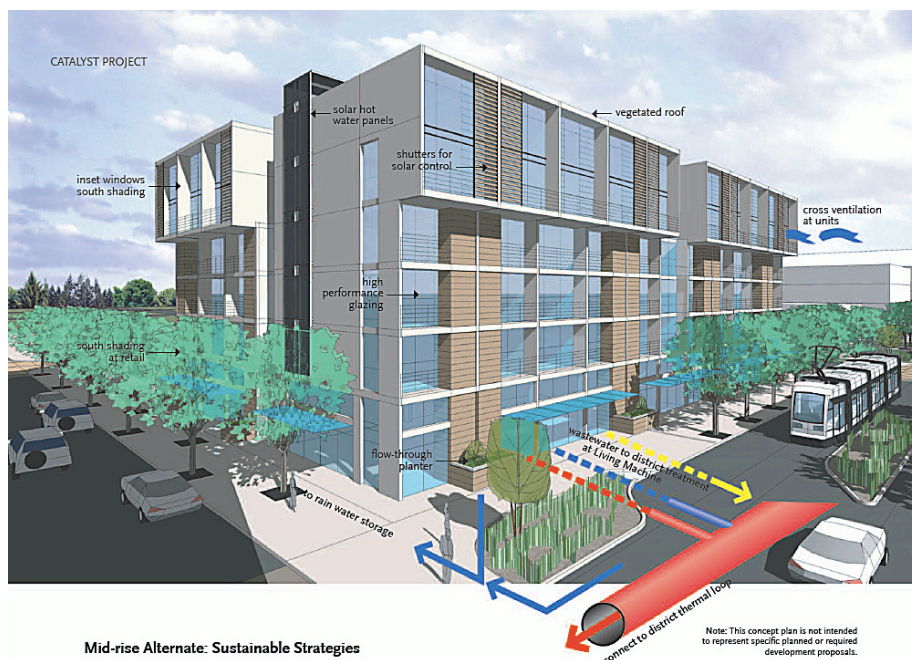
The Businesses for an Environmentally Sustainable Tomorrow (BEST) Business Center is a one-stop shop for businesses in Portland, Oregon, to evaluate their operations in the areas of energy, water, waste and recycling, purchasing, green building and transportation. The business center streamlines access to financial incentives and technical assistance to help businesses conserve resources, improve efficiencies, save money and provide a healthy workplace for employees. The BEST Business Center was created through a partnership with city and regional government programs and utility companies including the City of Portland Bureau of Planning and Sustainability, City of Portland Water Bureau, Metro, Pacific Power, Portland Development Commission and Portland General Electric.

The BEST Business Center helped us evaluate what changes we could make that would be most beneficial to the environment, our guests and our community.

— Mike Duggan,
Property Manager,
McMenamins
Kennedy School

The BEST Business Center,
accessed August 11, 2010
[bestbusinesscenter.org/
about-us/](http://bestbusinesscenter.org/about-us/)

- **Collaboration** Eco-efficient employment strategies focus on business and infrastructure efficiencies, making both public and private organizations responsible for certain actions. Using the workshop framework ensured diverse stakeholder interests were included in the planning phase, and it helped build a sense of ownership needed for implementation. The workshop process occurred over a four month period, which helped the project maintain momentum. That said, it is important for communities to be attuned to their particular set of stakeholders and their time available for eco-efficient planning to determine whether a slower pace is needed to increase comfort with decision-making and/or reduce demand on participants' schedules. Establishing a few members of the working group as a core team is helpful in setting up the project, identifying the right stakeholders, and checking-in with participants throughout the project.
- **Readiness assessment** This is a key element in the process as it further refines the project and determines whether it has the foundation necessary to bring a working group together to develop an action plan for the specific employment area. While brief, the assessment covers key information to determine the likelihood the action plan will take hold once the pilot project process is over. Key elements include assessing the activity of the market, recent planning efforts, and the interest and energy level among local businesses and property owners. Holding an assessment meeting is integral to lining up different objectives, clarifying desired deliverables and outcomes, and shaping the project proposal.
- **Applicability** While the application of the Eco-Efficient Toolkit, strategies, and pilot program may vary significantly depending on local political, regulatory, and physical conditions, there is great value in sharing lessons and resources regionally. For most local communities, the knowledge that eco-efficient strategies have been successfully implemented elsewhere is invaluable to support the possibility of implementation in their own community. In many cases, technical assistance and facilitation support may be the needed impetus to catalyze action and implementation. The pilot communities agreed that that the pilot program framework can be of value for multiple sites and projects. Participants feel as though they could easily use the same process for different types of projects and in different communities around their jurisdiction.



Suitability The process seems best suited for local governments or employment- and development-related nonprofits (e.g. chambers of commerce or community development corporations) to act as lead agency while engaging a broad range of public, private, institutional and utility representatives. Identifying the right working group members at the beginning is important in making the process work and establishing action items with dedicated responsible parties. Think through the desired outcomes to ensure the right mix of stakeholders is represented. The working group process can be valuable for understanding the needs of multiple stakeholders and getting everyone moving together in the same direction. There is tension between keeping the working group small enough to get through the process efficiently and effectively, while including an array of stakeholders. Interim stakeholder interviews and surveys can help bring in additional voices while keeping the working group a manageable size.

Technical expertise Some level of consultant support and independent facilitation may be necessary to ensure a productive outcome. Participants viewed the dedicated facilitator as the central piece to getting so much work done in so little time with a diverse group of people. Providing preliminary feasibility assessment whether through stakeholder interviews, working group surveys, or triple-bottom-line analysis is also critical in moving the working group to make decisions and develop the action plan. Engaging regional and local representatives from places that have implemented these strategies may be a valuable asset to exploring alternatives and identifying specific action items. An introductory meeting to review all of the relevant Metro resources available to the community could also help the community expand the list of potential strategies.

Functionality Throughout the series of workshops, working groups used Metro's Community Investment Toolkit as a reference guide that provided additional, practical ideas for consideration. With a specific project and/or development site identified, participants found the toolkit more accessible and usable. The toolkit case studies were critical in understanding strategies and providing some level of assurance that strategies they have not yet personally tested have proven feasible in other communities.

Tips for implementation

- Consider employment areas that are ready for investment and have plans and policies already aligned around economic development and sustainability.
- Use the Readiness Assessment form to select, refine, and prioritize projects.
- Identify key community and business leaders committed to the success of the selected project area to serve on the core project team.
- Spend enough time refining the project with the core team and identifying the right stakeholders to participate on the project's working group.
- Survey the toolkit to identify eco-efficient strategies and see how other communities have successfully implemented the tools under consideration in the project area.
- Assess strategies through interviews, surveys, and triple-bottom-line assessments even if based on order of magnitude estimates.
- Identify next steps, timing, responsible leads, team members, and required resources for each action item.
- Consider hiring a consultant, engaging Metro, or seeking input from other communities with eco-efficient planning and implementation experience.
- Appoint an independent facilitator to keep the working group on task and encourage decision-making.

Chicago Waste to Profit Network

The Chicago Manufacturing Center created the Chicago Waste to Profit Network to provide members with in-depth support to implement by-product synergy, a sustainable practice that uses industrial by-products as raw material for other industrial processes. This process helps reduce waste, business costs, and greenhouse gas emissions and promotes the efficient use of natural resources through material reuse. The network works with businesses to develop a sustainability and growth strategy based on the business' priorities and environmental goals. The strategy establishes incremental steps that result in increasing payoffs and cost savings.

Our work with CMC has made an enormous difference for us. As a small company, you have to be ahead of the market. People who wouldn't give us an interview in the past now want to talk.

– Marvin Klein, President,
PortionPac Chemical
Corporation
Chicago Manufacturing Center,
accessed August 11, 2010
www.cmcusa.orgs

Metro

Making a great place

Clean air and clean water do not stop at city limits or county lines. Neither does the need for jobs, a thriving economy, and sustainable transportation and living choices for people and businesses in the region. Voters have asked Metro to help with the challenges and opportunities that affect the 25 cities and three counties in the Portland metropolitan area.

A regional approach simply makes sense when it comes to providing services, operating venues and making decisions about how the region grows. Metro works with communities to support a resilient economy, keep nature close by and respond to a changing climate. Together we're making a great place, now and for generations to come.

Metro Council President
Tom Hughes

Metro Council
Shirley Craddick, District 1
Carlotta Collette, District 2
Craig Dirksen, District 3
Kathryn Harrington, District 4
Sam Chase, District 5
Bob Stacey, District 6

Auditor
Suzanne Flynn

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connect](http://www.oregonmetro.gov/connect)

Resources

- **For more information and a copy of the Old Town Hillsboro Eco-Efficient Action Plan, contact:**

Metro

600 NE Grand Ave.
Portland, OR 97232
503-797-1839
www.oregonmetro.gov/communityinvestment

- **For more information on implementation of the action plan, contact:**
City of Hillsboro Civic Center, Economic Development

150 East Main St.
Hillsboro, OR 97123
503-681-6177
www.ci.hillsboro.or.us

- **For more information on examples of eco-efficient employment projects from other communities, contact:**

Chicago Waste to Profit Network

Chicago Manufacturing Center
312-542-0430
www.cmcusa.org/index2.cfm

Businesses for an Environmentally Sustainable Tomorrow (BEST) Business Center

503-823-7037
503-823-3919
www.bestbusinesscenter.org

Town of Hinton

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