

Eugene Mayor Piercy's Sustainable Business Initiative
Summary of Progress to Date
December 12, 2005

Overview

In April of 2005, the Sustainable Business Initiative began with a brainstorming meeting with over 60 community members. Since the formation of the sixteen-person Task Force in June, the group has met once a month, for a total of six meetings. A Technical Advisory Committee, made up of about 50 members, has met once, and many of the members have participated in or observed roundtable meetings.

The November SBI Task Force meeting provided an opportunity for Task Force members to hear from the Eugene Chamber of Commerce and the December meeting will join the Task Force with the Institute for Sustainable Ethics and Economics. Future Task Force meetings are planned with the Lane County Labor Council and the Neighborhood Leadership Council.

Ten initial roundtables have taken place on the following topics: green building; education and technical assistance for local businesses; reuse and recycling; financing and funding for sustainable businesses; biofuels; renewable energy; natural and organic foods; sustainability in public education systems; sustainable healthcare; and natural products.

Follow-up roundtables have been held for green building, reuse and recycling, and renewable energy. A follow-up meeting for the public education for sustainability roundtable will take place December 13th. On average, approximately 8 to 15 people have participated in each roundtable, with about 5 to 15 people observing each roundtable. In coordinating the roundtables, 20-30 people within each sector were contacted to provide information.

On December 13th, the first of two Town Hall meetings will occur, providing the public with the opportunity to share their views on the SBI.

A survey for the public went online on October 26th. As of December 5th, there had been 177 hits to the survey, with 100 of those resulting in a completed survey.

Summary:

- 6 Task Force meetings
- 1 Technical Advisory Committee meeting
- 10 initial roundtable meetings, 4 follow-up roundtable meetings (by Dec. 13th)
- 1 Town Hall meeting (Dec. 13th)
- Approximately 200-250 people participating in meetings, with about 50 observing.
- 100 people have completed the online survey

Initial Outcomes:

○ *Policy and Program Recommendations*

Each roundtable has produced a suite of policy and program recommendations that the City of Eugene and other local institutions (e.g. UO, LCC, EWEB, Lane County, State of Oregon) can take to help retain, grow, or create business and job opportunities in the sector. In

addition to industry specific recommendations, a number of common themes have emerged that cut across sectors including:

- The need for the City of Eugene to officially declare its support for businesses that use sustainable practices and/or produce sustainable products, and to back up that support with specific policies and programs.
- The need to clearly define what is meant by sustainable business practices and products in each sector and to outline the short and long term economic benefits of such practices
- The need to educate the business community, government employees, and consumers about sustainable practices and products
- The need for an easily accessible "one-stop-shopping" information resource

- *Local Industry Networking Associations*

Four of the roundtables are moving towards creating local networking forums or associations, which is a key step toward industry cluster formation: natural and organic foods, renewable energy, green building and natural products.

- *Website Clearinghouse of Information*

Roger Ebbage from the Energy Management Program at Lane Community College has volunteered to create a website that will serve as a clearinghouse of information on all of the sustainability issues that are the focus of the SBI.

- *Sustainability in Public Education Forum, Classes and Coordinator*

Lane Community College has offered to host a forum for all local educational institutions to share best sustainability practices; develop continuing education classes for teachers to help them incorporate sustainability into curriculum; and help raise funds, hire and even provide office space for a sustainability coordinator who could work with local school districts.

- *List of Commercial Fleets as Potential Biofuel Users*

Roger Ebbage at LCC has offered to create a complete list of commercial fleets in town. LRAPA, SeQuential Biofuels and Tyree Oil will use this list to continue targeted marketing of biofuels to individual fleets.

- *Survey of Local Business Needs*

At the recommendation of the training and technical assistance roundtable, a draft survey has been developed that will be sent to roundtable participants and other local business seeking information on economic, social, and environmental characteristics as well as the type of sustainability education and technical assistance they desire.

- *Green Finance Strategies*

As an outcome of the roundtable on Finance and Funding for Sustainable Businesses, Laurie McClain of Socially Responsible Financial Advisors and Scott L Pope of Sustainable Wealth Management developed the a suite of green finance opportunities that could be pursued to help finance the development of local sustainable businesses.