

Equity: Expanding Opportunity for All

By Jill Fuglister, CLF Co-Director

JUSTICE
balance
unbiased
equity
FAIRNESS
access
inclusion

Equity. It's a word that CLF has been talking about a lot over the past six years and will be continuing to talk about for many years ahead. Why? Because advancing equity—removing barriers to opportunity and rebuilding our communities so that all residents in our region are able to contribute to, and participate in, creating a healthy future—is long-term work. It's complex work. It's about systemic change. And, it is what our Regional Equity Atlas Project is all about.

I recently heard a presentation by David Shipler, author of *The Working Poor: Invisible in America*. In his speech, he described poverty as an ecological system—a set of interactions between personal choices, circumstance, the environment, and social structures. In other words, his message was that poverty is complex, and if we are to truly understand it and devise appropriate and effective solutions, we need to consider the full picture. We need to put all of the pieces that make up the complex puzzle of poverty on the table, and apply an integrated approach to solutions.

Shipler highlighted that acknowledging the full costs of poverty is an important part of building a comprehensive understanding of it. For the individuals experiencing poverty, especially sustained poverty over time, costs include loss of dignity and self esteem, higher incidences of many chronic health conditions, which leads to greater personal medical costs, and reduced life expectancy. Poverty also imposes substantial economic costs on society as a whole. For example, it is far more expensive to provide medical services through hospital emergency rooms, like often occurs with uninsured people, than to make medical insurance and better preventative supports much more accessible.

➤ Equity, continued on p.11.

EQUALITY
FAIRNESS

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Connections is the journal of the Coalition for a Livable Future. CLF unites over 90 diverse non-profits and businesses and hundreds of individuals to promote healthy and sustainable communities. By connecting issues, people and organizations, CLF empowers communities to take action together and shape the big decisions affecting the Portland region's future.

In 1994, the Coalition was created by a diverse group of Portland area non-profit leaders who recognized that the challenges they were working on individually in different communities across the metropolitan area were connected. Realizing this interdependence, they came together to educate each other and work cooperatively to create a more sustainable future for the region.

WHAT WE DO:

COORDINATE *Coordinate the work of our member organizations across disciplines to be more effective and to avoid working at cross-purposes*

RESEARCH *Develop cutting-edge research to empower our partners with the information they need to act*

EDUCATE *Educate the public about current issues and solutions to community challenges; engage residents in shaping decisions about our region's future*

ADVOCATE *Provide leadership and informed recommendations that recognizes the big picture to impact public policy decisions*

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Join Us!

The Benefits of Joining a Coalition — By joining the Coalition, you help create a stronger, collective voice for a just, sustainable region. A diverse membership allows us to understand each other's issues and concerns, to find common ground and to share resources and information.

Individual Membership — While only organizations, businesses and government agencies can be voting members, individual members play a very important role as our advisors and supporters. You can participate in any of our task forces, committees, and working groups. A donation of \$40 or more will open the door for a just and sustainable society and you will receive a subscription to the *Connections* Journal, discounts on our special events, and invitations to participate in our work.

Business, Government and Organizational Membership — Increasing our impact means increasing our intelligence. Community organizations, businesses and government agencies are invited to join the Coalition. We offer a variety of membership levels to suit the needs of your organization. Our voting members are the core of the Coalition, carrying out our policy work and participating most actively. Members at all levels are invited to participate in task forces, working groups, member meetings and CLF events such as the Regional Livability Summit.

How to Join — Use the enclosed envelope to join CLF by making a tax-deductible contribution. If you'd like your organization or business to become a member of the Coalition, contact us at 503-294-2889 or info@clfuture.org and ask for a membership information packet. Packets are also available online at www.clfuture.org/involve/join.



CLF Board Member Marcus Mundy

Portland Businessman and community leader **Marcus C. Mundy** is the President and CEO of the Urban League of Portland. Mr. Mundy has led the 62-year-old civil rights organization and service agency since July, 2006. His goal is to serve his community through focus on education, employment, economic equity, and the continuing advocacy needed to effect change in the critical areas that impact the lives of Oregonians.

He is a member of the Oregon Health Fund Board and several boards and committees, including the Coalition for a Livable Future. "I, and the Urban League of Portland, believe in the work of CLF," said Marcus. "I believe in affordable housing, safe and available transportation, beautiful greenspaces, clean air and water, and a livable region for all of Portland's citizens, including the poorest, the communities of color, the underrepresented. I hope to promote the efforts of CLF in every setting I have access to, and as often as I can, to help ensure that the Portland my children grow up in is clean, safe, sustainable and forward thinking about how we live in this region."

Mr. Mundy is also a Principal at a local healthcare compliance consulting firm, Mundy Consulting LLC. His practice assists clients in achieving compliance with respect to applicable laws, regulations and accreditation standards for their respective businesses, including but not limited to HIPAA, Sarbanes Oxley and other federal and state regulations. Prior to his role at Mundy Consulting, Mr. Mundy was the Vice President and Regional Compliance Officer for Kaiser Permanente Northwest.

Mr. Mundy attended Howard University in Washington, DC, receiving his Bachelor in Business Administration, and attended Howard University's Graduate School of Business. He received his Master of Business Administration (MBA) degree from the University of Oregon, in its Executive MBA Program (which collaborates with Oregon State University and Portland State University).

Making the Invisible Visible: Portland's Native American Community

Reprinted with permission from Portland Indian Leaders' Roundtable

Portland has the 9th largest Native American population in the United States (MSA, US Census 2000). We live here and we thrive here. We are numerous. The Portland urban Native community is descended from over 380 tribes and many of us are multi-tribal and multi-ethnic. We represent varying degrees of tribal affiliation: some of us are tribally enrolled and some of us are not, but we all have ancestral ties to our tribes. Some of us are enrolled members of local tribes with reserved treaty rights to fish and gather in the Columbia and Willamette Rivers, but many of us are members or descendants of more distant tribes. We come to this city for as many reasons as there are clans and people, and our stories are powerful.

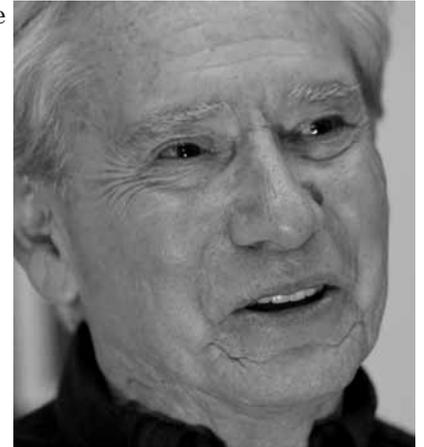
The Portland metro area rests on traditional village sites of the Multnomah, Kathlamet, Clackamas, Bands of Chinook, Tualatin Kalapuya, Molalla, and many other Tribes who made their homes along the Columbia River, creating communities and summer encampments to harvest and use the plentiful natural resources of the area.

After European contact, what followed for the indigenous people of the Portland area was a series of territorial and then federal policy decisions designed to eliminate, and later assimilate, Native people. The 18th and early 19th centuries brought diseases that decimated populations, often killing 9 out of every 10 people (Boyd: 1999). The Boarding School Era policies, which lasted from the mid 1800s through the 1960s, marked the beginning of a long campaign to integrate indigenous people into the Western culture. "Kill the Indian and save the man" summarized the philosophy that underlay most government policies of the era (Pratt: 1879). Federal Relocation Policy, which began in the 1950s, forced over a third of the Native population to relocate to seven major cities, including Portland (Fixico: 2002).

Termination of federal recognition of many tribes began in 1954. Under the Western Oregon Termination Act (1954) and the Klamath Termination Act (1954), a large number of Oregon Tribes had their governments abolished, lands taken and social services revoked. In 1977, the Confederated Tribes of the Siletz Indians would be the first Oregon Tribe to regain its federally recognized tribal status; the Grand Ronde, Klamath, have



subsequently had their Termination repealed by an act of Congress, and other tribal communities have been federally recognized after decades of struggle. There are still tribes in Oregon for whom termination remains a bitter reality, and even for tribes who have been reinstated its effects are still felt. In response, thousands of our Native families came to Portland to seek jobs, a place to live, and community. In the 2000 U.S. Census, the Portland-Vancouver MSA—a census bureau defined metropolitan region that includes Multnomah County and parts of Clackamas, Clark, and Washington Counties—reported that there were 19,209 Native Americans of one race and 38,926



multiracial Native Americans living in the Portland Metro area (US Census 2000, SF3).



Currently, Native people count disproportionately among the urban poor. We experience the highest rates of homelessness, poverty and unemployment of all ethnic groups; depression, addiction and diabetes impact us in numbers far exceeding the norm. We constitute 24% of all children in foster care in Multnomah County, and only 37% of our high school students living in Portland graduate on time (Portland Schools Foundation: 2006).

Even with our large population and the strong evidence of need, resources have not been equitably distributed to our community. There are false perceptions that we no longer exist and chronic undercounts, inaccurate data, and stereotypes about

A Tax Credit for Working Families: A Step Toward Social Equity

By Juan Carlos Ordóñez, Communications Director of the Oregon Center for Public Policy,
a member of Oregonians for Working Families.

In an equitable world, work would signify economic security and opportunity. Wages would cover a family's basic necessities, provide a savings cushion and offer individuals a chance to achieve their full potential.

We are a long way from that goal. Today, many families in the Portland metro region and across Oregon struggle just to make ends meet. Some must choose between putting food on the table, paying rent or filling up the gas tank. Far too often, work is not a path out of poverty.

Oregon will soon have an opportunity to take a step in a better direction — to make work pay more for struggling working families. Next legislative session, the statewide coalition called Oregonians for Working Families (www.oregoniansforworkingfamilies.org) will advocate in favor of a bill to increase the Oregon Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC). While no shortcut to social equity, an expansion of the EITC would constitute a step in that direction.

An effective anti-poverty strategy

Providing working families a tax credit to boost their earnings is an anti-poverty strategy with a proven track record. The strategy dates back to 1975, when Congress created the first EITC to help low-income working families with children offset part of their Social Security taxes and provide an incentive to work. Over the years, both Republican and Democratic administrations have embraced and expanded the program.

Policymakers from across the political spectrum hail the effectiveness of the EITC. Each year, the federal program helps lift 4.4 million people, over half of them children, out of poverty.

Oregon's small EITC

Oregon enacted its own EITC in 1997. Oregon's EITC is calculated as a share — currently 6 percent — of the federal EITC. At 6 percent, Oregon's tax credit is small. To put it in perspective, state EITCs across the country range from as low as 3.5 percent to as high as 35 percent of the federal credit. Of the 24 states in the country that offer a state EITC, Oregon's tax credit is tied for sixth lowest.

Oregon's inequitable tax system

An equitable tax system is a progressive tax system, one based on ability to pay. By asking more of those who benefit most from the economy, such a tax system fosters opportunity for all. Progressive taxation is not just a moral imperative but also sound public policy. It helps create the conditions under which all members of society can fulfill their economic potential.

Unfortunately, Oregon's tax system is inequitable. Oregon families in the lowest fifth of the income scale pay a greater share of their income in state and local taxes than any other income group. Specifically, the lowest fifth of income earners, whose income averages under \$16,000 per year, pay 9.3 percent of their income in taxes. By contrast, the wealthiest 1 percent of families — with yearly income averaging over a million dollars — pay only 6.7 percent.

Inequity is also evident in Oregon's persistence in taxing the income of struggling families. While the most equitable component of Oregon's tax system is its moderately progressive income tax, the state income tax nevertheless reaches the poor and near-poor. Indeed, Oregon's income tax on those families is among the highest in the nation. Most other states no longer tax families with below-poverty incomes.

Oregon requires a minimum wage worker employed full-time, year-round and supporting one child to pay about \$321 in state income taxes. In other words, that hardworking parent trying to support a child loses in state income taxes about a month's worth of food. In so doing, Oregon places yet another hurdle in the path of that low-income family.

A better Oregon EITC

Because the EITC is an effective strategy, Oregon can improve its anti-poverty efforts simply by expanding the tax credit to a more meaningful level. During next year's legislative session, Oregonians for Working Families will advocate in favor of legislation to increase the size of Oregon's EITC from its current 6 percent to 18 percent of the federal EITC.

This improvement of Oregon's EITC would help reduce the inequity in Oregon's tax system. To illustrate, the expansion would eliminate income taxes on a full-time, minimum wage worker with one child. If an 18 percent EITC were already on the books, that family would have had \$342 more last year to help pay the bills or even tuck away a little in savings. The expansion would not entirely eliminate income taxes on all working poor families, but it would come close to that goal and would reduce the share of their income that goes to paying all of Oregon's taxes.

By expanding the EITC, Oregon would no longer stand near the bottom of states that offer the tax credit. While it would not catapult Oregon into a leadership position, the 18 percent tax credit would at least place us in the middle of the pack among states with an EITC.

More importantly, an expansion of the EITC would benefit economically a significant portion of the state's population.

More than 220,000 Oregon households—one in seven of all state households—receive the federal EITC. Roughly 40 percent of those households reside in the Portland metro area. These households are eligible for the state EITC and would qualify for more dollars if it were expanded.

An expansion of Oregon’s EITC would redirect dollars to communities with concentrations of low-income working families. Take, for example, Oregon’s House District 44, which includes most of North Portland. In that district, about 18 percent of households claim the federal EITC, compared to 14 percent of households statewide. Research shows that EITC recipients tend to spend their money locally, so an expansion of the Oregon EITC would result in more dollars circulating in communities with a high proportion of EITC recipients.

Increasing the EITC does not carry a high price tag. The Oregon Center for Public Policy estimates the cost to be about \$100 million during the 2009-11 budget cycle. That amounts to less than 1 percent of projected 2009-11 General Fund revenues.

While the current economic situation likely will pressure the next state budget, the money exists to pay for the EITC increase

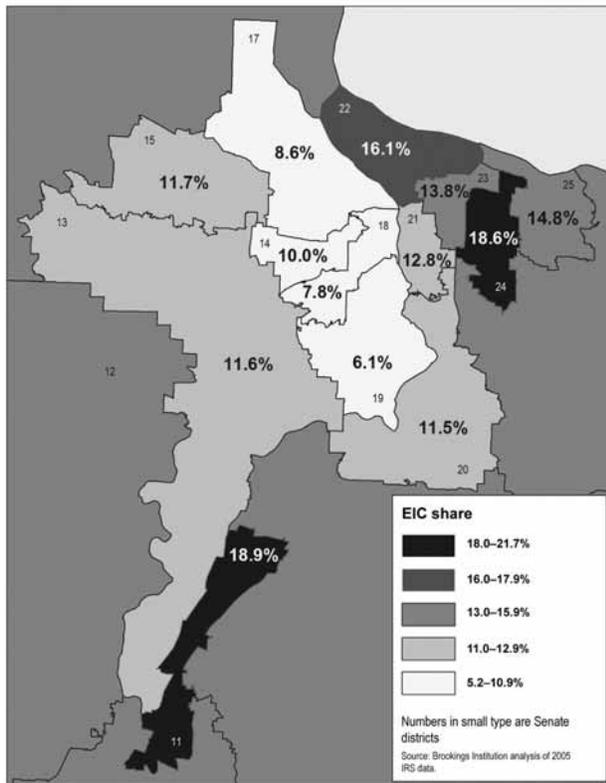
if helping working families is a priority. Our current tax system is riddled with tax loopholes and misplaced priorities. The question that a proposed EITC expansion faces is not one of cost — because it is affordable — but of whether social equity is important to our elected leaders.

Making the expansion a political priority and legislative reality is the goal of Oregonians for Working Families. As of this writing, 50 organizations from across the state, including the Coalition of the Livable Future, have joined its ranks. Its members include low-income advocates, health advocates, child and family advocates, senior groups, faith groups, community action agencies and businesses. (For more information on the efforts of Oregonians to expand the state’s EITC, please visit www.oregoniansforworkingfamilies.org.)

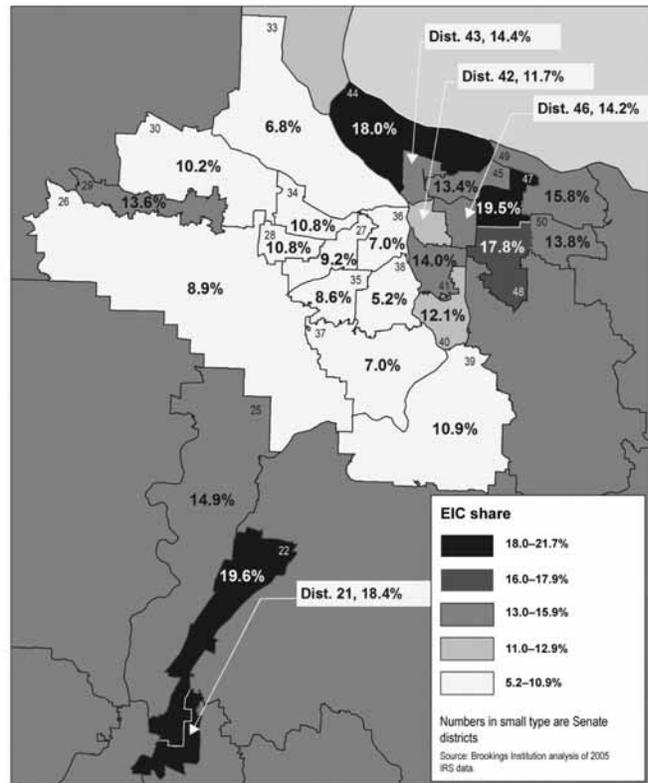
In sum, the EITC is a proven anti-poverty strategy, but Oregon must expand its own version for the credit’s impact to be more meaningful. While it would not by itself resolve the unfairness in our tax and economic systems, an increase of the state EITC is a practical and positive step toward an equitable society. ✧

Federal Earned Income Credit by Portland Metro Area State Senate and House Districts

Senate Districts



House Districts



When Development Adds Up: The Social Bottom Line of Investment in the Region

By Janet Hammer, Program Director Social Equity and Opportunity Forum
Portland State University, College of Urban and Public Affairs

We've all heard the riff...sustainable development has economic, environmental, and social dimensions—with the health of one dimension dependent on the health of the others. Whether referred to as the Three P's (people, planet, profit), the Three E's (equity, environment, economy), or the Triple Bottom Line (social, economic, environmental)—the concept refers to three, integrated elements. Too often, however, the social dimensions of sustainability get left behind in policy and program decisions. The Social Equity and Opportunity Forum (SEOF) of PSU's College of Urban and Public Affairs aims to change that and is leading an initiative in the metro region to advance thinking and practice regarding the social bottom line of investments in land and building development.

The triple bottom line phrase was coined by John Elkington of the UK to focus corporations' attention not just on the economic value that they add, but also on the environmental and social value they add or destroy.¹ Where the "bottom line" in conventional accounting practice reports on financial profitability of investment decisions, triple bottom line (TBL or 3BL) reporting aims to provide a more complete picture by accounting for economic, environmental, and social performance of investment.

Interest in the triple bottom line spans for-profit, non-profit, and governmental sectors. In the non-profit sector, there is a need to account for mission-related, non-financial performance of invested or donated dollars. Without such measures, much of an investment's value may be left undocumented and under-appreciated.² For example, an organization that provides business and leadership skills to at-risk youth or unemployed adults should account not only for the income that it generates, but also for additional social and financial payoffs that accrue such as decreased public assistance expenditures.³ In the for-profit sector, companies are being asked to account for the impacts of investment beyond the financial profitability to individual shareholders or the organization. For example, a project may be "profitable" to shareholders but leave a community worse off because of pollution, displaced residents, or other project impacts. In the government sector, the search for triple bottom line measures is precipitated by a need to serve the public interest and promote healthy communities. Across sectors, individuals and organizations aspire to more wisely spend their resources and build stakeholder confidence by transparently sharing performance results. TBL accounting helps achieve those goals.

Despite broad interest in the concept of triple bottom line accounting, a number of questions remain regarding how to do this on the ground: progress in assessing the social bottom line component of the triple bottom line has been particularly lagging.

Responding to this gap, the Social Equity and Opportunity Forum is leading an effort to advance thinking and practice regarding social bottom line (SBL) accounting for investments made in building and land development in the Portland metropolitan region. In Phase One of the project we:

- 1) engaged leaders from public, private, and non-profit sectors to define what it means to have a "good social bottom line,"
- 2) reviewed existing approaches to social bottom line accounting in order to identify best practices and current gaps in theory and practice, and
- 3) developed a draft process for assessing the social bottom line of our region's investments in development.

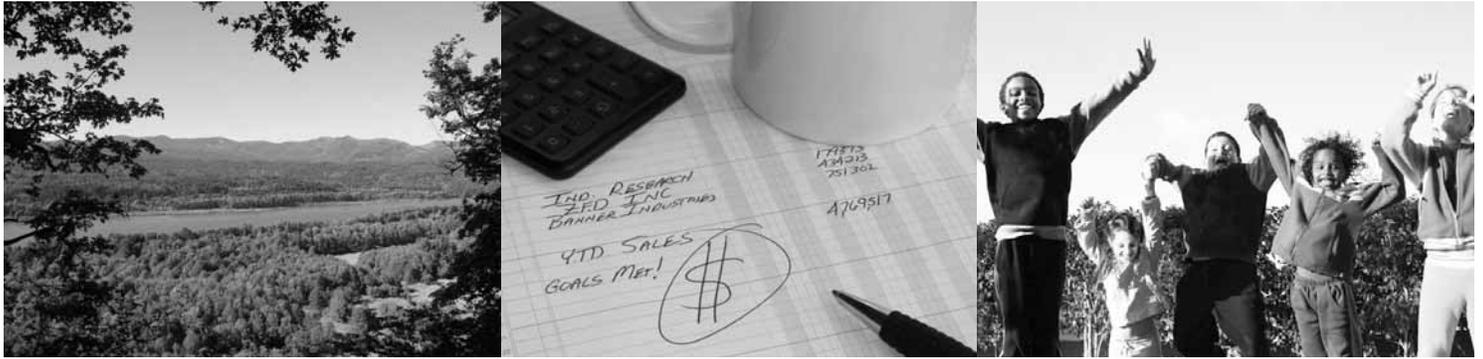
We began the process by asking how various stakeholders were thinking and talking about the social bottom line. Before we could draft an appropriate social bottom line assessment process for the region, we needed to know if different sectors think about the social bottom line in the same way and if so, whether they use the same language. To answer these questions, we hosted representatives from seven diverse sectors to explore the meaning of social bottom line assessment. The seven sectors included: business, community, development, finance, government, labor, and research.

So what did we find in the course of our exploration?

Strikingly, the diverse participants had more in common than not. Their definitions of a good social bottom line were similar, as were the issues they identified regarding how to measure the social bottom line and how to foster positive social bottom line outcomes. However, participants were not aware that they shared this common vision, nor are their networks and relationships sufficient to collaborate effectively to achieve this vision and reconcile areas of disagreement or misunderstanding.

In our review of social bottom line assessment methods and literature we found that the topic has been approached in a variety of ways, often by different names. What is measured, and how, varies depending upon the audience, purpose, and resources for assessment. We identified over 25 social bottom line assessment approaches being used in the US and abroad that have relevance to our efforts here. We also identified a number of issues that must be addressed if the practice of social bottom line assessment is to advance. These include:

- ▶ Widespread use of social bottom line assessment is not likely to occur unless it is required. In many ways we heard, "it won't get done unless it is required." At the same time, assessment cannot be mandated without an appropriate allocation of funds for effective implementation. Institutions and organizations in the region need to define a framework for requiring and funding assessment of the social bottom line of investment in development.



- ▶ Assessment quality and confidence in results will be greater if conducted by a skilled, third-party assessor. Capacity for third-party certification of social bottom line impacts will need to be developed. This includes incorporation of participatory, community-based research methods that appropriately engage and compensate community partners.
- ▶ Questions of time, space, and scale need to be addressed when accounting for the social bottom line. That is, what size or type of project requires a SBL assessment, what geographic boundaries of impact are considered, and over what time are impacts considered?
- ▶ Many questions remain as to how to make an assessment both manageable and meaningful. Careful consideration must be given to the challenge of designing an assessment that is rigorous and robust without being too burdensome. Further, it must be remembered that the impacts of development cannot be reduced to a single “bottom line” number, monetized or otherwise. Where the financial bottom line may be a literal, summary figure, the social bottom line cannot be viewed in the same way.
- ▶ Accountability mechanisms must be built in, with reasonable consequences associated with not reporting, reporting poorly, or demonstrating a poor social bottom line as well as rewards associated with performing well.
- ▶ Achievement of a good social bottom line is facilitated when equity and opportunity values are embedded in public and private sector policy and decision-making across the life cycle of development (e.g., goal statements in plans, requirements in requests for proposals). Further, assessment of the SBL of development investment should be used as a decision filter in allocating resources, as well as an evaluation after a project is funded, and assessment findings should inform continuous improvement and adaptive governance.

Building on the findings of the sector meetings, and the review of models and literature, we created a draft process for assessing the social bottom line of development investment in the Portland metro region. The draft assessment process aims to be responsive to context, understanding that what meets the needs and interests of one neighborhood, or is feasible for one project, may be different for another. To support this responsiveness, the process aims to be participatory in nature, engaging community members in defining and assessing priorities. The process also aims to be holistic in scope by addressing multiple dimensions of individual and community well-being and recognizing that the social bottom line is intertwined with financial and environmental bottom lines. It aims to account for the full costs and benefits of a project so that “development” builds community wealth. It aims to foster achievement of a “bottom line” that leaves individuals and the community at large better off. It aims to discern qualitative differences between “growth” and “development” and to ensure that benefits are fairly accrued. The draft assessment process is offered as a point of departure, with the intention that it will be tested and refined over time.

If the Portland-Vancouver region truly wants to fulfill its aspirations for sustainability we need to integrate the “3 Ps.” By accounting for impacts of the investments we make in development on people, planet, and profit, triple bottom line reporting can be an important tool in supporting our sustainability goals. Without a doubt there are challenges associated with measuring the social bottom line of development investment—both technical and institutional. Thus, our efforts must focus not just on developing a SBL accounting process but on raising awareness of the connections between social, environmental, and economic returns and building commitment to adopt assessment processes. By measuring what matters, investment dollars can be directed more efficiently and effectively, yielding development that “adds up.”

For information about the Social Bottom Line Project or other Social Equity and Opportunity Forum efforts contact Program Director Janet Hammer, PhD at hammerj@pdx.edu or 503-725-5203 or visit <http://pdx.edu/cupa/seof.html>. ✨

¹ Elkington, J. (2004). Enter the triple bottom line. In Henriques, A. & Richardson, J. (Eds.) *The triple bottom line: Does it all add up?: Assessing the sustainability of business and CSR*. London, UK: Earthscan.
² Emerson, Jed. (2003). The blended value proposition: Integrating social and financial returns. *California Management Review*, 45(4): 35-51.
³ Clark, C., Rosenzweig W., Long, D. & Olsen, S. (2004). Double bottom line project report: Assessing social impact in double bottom line ventures – methods catalog. Berkeley, CA: UC Berkeley Haas School of Business Center for Responsible Business. Working Paper Series. Paper 13. Retrieved at <http://repositories.cdlib.org/crb/wps/> and <http://www.riseproject.org/reports.htm>.

The Coalition of Communities of Color: Its Past, Its Present, Its Future

By Fatima Schoemaker, Native American Youth and Family Center

Portland's diverse communities of color have a long history of working together to ensure that quality culturally specific services are reaching underrepresented communities. Leadership from these communities operated informally through the Family Services Network and formally became the Coalition of Communities of Color in 2002. The Coalition represents six communities of color—African American, African Immigrant and Refugee, Asian/Pacific Islander, Latino, Native American, and Slavic—through a number of local culturally specific service providers. Membership of the group includes a wide range of organizations and community networks such as Asian Pacific American Network of Oregon (APANO), Asian Family Center, Immigrant and Refugee Community Organization (IRCO), El Programa Hispano, Self Enhancement, Inc. (SEI), Urban League of Portland, Slavic Coalition, Native American Youth and Family Center (NAYA), and Africa House, among others.

In the beginning the Coalition members took time to discuss mutual values and goals, conversations that created a strong foundation for future challenges. The group agreed that its mission is to unite as a coalition to address the socioeconomic disparities, institutional racism, and inequity of services experienced by the families, children and communities it represents. The Coalition also agreed to organize communities for collective action with the goal of achieving social change around self-determination, wellness, equality, justice and prosperity. The members' vision is for increased political power, greater representation of communities of color in key leadership positions, and influence in decision making. This vision stems from the shared values of acceptance and understanding of all cultures, trust, unity, mutual support, and ultimately equity and justice for all people.

Since its formal inception in 2002, the Coalition has achieved many successes, including the addition of a culturally specific service provision in Multnomah County's SUN service system. The SUN program is designed to integrate key social and support services for school age children, youth, and their families in targeted Multnomah County schools. After many conversations with Multnomah County staff and active collaboration on the part of the Coalition, a funding formula was created that allocates a certain percentage of funding to each of the six ethnic communities in the County. This early success stemmed from many difficult conversations that dealt with dividing County resources equitably among the six communities. Rather

than engage with each other divisively, the Coalition members struggled together to find solutions that would enhance not only their own specific communities, but also the larger network of communities of color in Portland, while strengthening the relationship among Coalition members. Ensuring that traditionally underrepresented populations have access to County resources is only the beginning of the Coalition's work. Through this, a large network of support services has been established that empowers communities of color and the organizations working to serve them.

Six years later, the Coalition's voice has grown stronger and advocacy efforts have expanded beyond County funding processes into other arenas of public policy that impact communities of color. Current efforts are focused on the development and implementation of a comprehensive research project on population data for communities of color in the Portland metro area. The Coalition has agreed that accurate population data and thorough needs assessment are a top priority in order to develop policies that accurately reflect and appropriately meet the needs of youth and families that reside in the City of Portland and Multnomah County.



Each of the six communities of color—African American, African Immigrant and Refugee, Asian/Pacific Islander, Latino, Native American, and Slavic—that comprise the Coalition have experienced significant negative impacts due to policies and decisions that were made based on inaccurate data, as well as policy decisions that are not in touch with the current ethnic communities that reside in

Portland. One example of inadequate data is the current information on high school dropout rates. The commonly used practice of gathering high school dropout information based only on twelfth grade completion overlooks a number of youth of color who drop out of school before they even reach the twelfth grade. Focusing solely on one grade does not demonstrate accurate progression of youth leading up to the twelfth grade¹, and actually overlooks a large number of youth who leave school before reaching their senior years, making the dropout rate seem much less significant than it actually is, particularly for youth of color and for youth living in poverty.





Each of the six communities of color—African American, African Immigrant and Refugee, Asian/Pacific Islander, Latino, Native American, and Slavic— that comprise the Coalition have experienced significant negative impacts due to policies and decisions that were made based on inaccurate data...

For all of these reasons, the Coalition developed the Participatory Research Project. The Coalition members believe that gathering community-validated data is a crucial step towards securing equitable resource distribution for communities of color. Community-validated data is scientific data that is gathered through accurate, rigorous, and reliable methods—data that is validated and supported as accurate by the communities it represents. Community-based participatory research is not only a more respectful data collection process (research “with” rather than “on”), but also produces information that accurately reflects the experiences of communities. The ultimate goal of the project is to capture and develop a clear understanding of the depth and breadth of the communities of color in Portland and Multnomah County. To gain accurate

Rather than focusing on staggering dropout rates in communities of color, this misinformation has kept critical services and interventions from becoming a priority. The data that currently exists for communities of color is equally flawed, and while these are the fastest growing groups in our community, services and policies have not been adjusted to reflect this reality.

data and needs assessments for communities of color, community members with long histories of mistrust in mainstream institutions will have to be reached, and the most effective conduit for this work will be the Coalition members.

Thanks to the Coalition, and others raising this issue, this is beginning to change. For example, in the City of Portland both its visionPDX² process and the Portland Plan³ call for improved data-driven decision making that reflects the shifting demographics of Portland. However, there is still much more to accomplish to ensure that accurate data collection occurs. In order to truly meet the needs of the diverse communities residing in the Portland metro area, there must first be an understanding of the real life experiences of the members of those communities. Accurate data and needs assessments are effective tools for understanding inequities that are experienced, as well as barriers that exist in the daily lives of people of color. To adequately plan for services and develop appropriate policies, the Coalition believes that local government agencies must first get a picture of what Portland looks like now, of who lives here and who’s moving here, rather than maintaining a picture based on an eight-year-old census that did not effectively reach communities of color.

Researchers from Portland State University’s School of Social Work will implement the Participatory Research Project. Organizations representing each community will work with the researchers to design data collection techniques and measures, as well as support PSU with community participation. The end result of this effort will be a comprehensive, community-validated data set and needs assessment. A broad group of stakeholders have come together to support the efforts of this project including the Coalition, PSU, and Multnomah County.



Through this, and numerous other advocacy efforts, the Coalition of Communities of Color has begun to weave the presence of traditionally disenfranchised communities into Portland’s identity. Its ongoing work will only strengthen the presence of communities of color in our region and, hopefully, will create the equality so many are seeking in the not so distant future. ✨

¹ Connected by 25 – an organization that works to connect every young Portlander to school, work and community by the age of 25 – conducted a research study called The Fourth R which academic indicators are the most effective for predicting high school completion.

² Launched in 2005 by Portland Mayor Tom Potter, visionPDX was an extensive public engagement process to develop a shared vision for our community for the next 20 years and beyond.

³ Starting in 2008, the City of Portland Bureau of Planning is updating its 1980 Comprehensive Plan and the 1988 Central City Plan in an effort called the Portland Plan. These plans will guide the physical, economic, social, cultural and environmental development of Portland over the next 30 years.

what we look like perpetuate this misconception. It is commonly believed that our education, health care, and other social support systems are fully paid for by government funding or gaming/casino revenues. These misunderstandings lead to policies and decisions that limit our access to social services and other community resources in the city where we live.

Despite the barriers, we continue to foster our culture and celebrate our heritage. We are successful, contributing members of the city of Portland. We pay taxes, we volunteer, we vote, we share our heritage and we care about the collective future of our children and of this community. There are well over 20 Native organizations in the area, run by and staffed with Native people, and our combined resources represent over 50 million dollars in revenue that go to local taxes, businesses and services. Our population is young and growing; over 40% of our community is under the age of 25 (US Census 2000). Some of our most important work revolves around preparing our youth to become the future leaders of this city, their tribes, and our community.

We are passing on our many strengths and assets. We serve the community and we help each other. As distinct and urban tribal peoples may be, we have a collective vision of what we want for our children and families. We work to connect with other urban Native people to create a common place to meet and reconnect to each other, our ceremonies and cultures. We want to be recognized and treated with respect. We want our cultures and religions to be valued. We want safe, affordable housing, access to employment options, and equal opportunities to build community. We have important and diverse indigenous values and worldviews that contribute to the livability and uniqueness of Portland, and we see ourselves as part of its future. ✨

Twenty-four Native agencies and their leaders gathered over the last year to create a story in common about the Native people of Portland. In July of 2007, 18 representatives met to talk about the severe undercounts of our population and how those create a level of “invisibility” in the Native community. For example, the lack of knowledge about the Native community and inaccurate demographic information can lead to inequitable funding. In addition to this challenge, the group knew that Native organizations in Portland often use different data sets which, while often necessary, add to the complexity of an already complicated issue.

Following a year of discussions and focused group work, the group formalized into the Portland Indian Leaders’ Roundtable (PILR). Together, PILR created an amazing two-page document describing the Portland Native community, designed to educate key audiences to the concerns the Native people of Portland share.

The Portland urban Native community is descended from over 380 tribes and many of us are multi-tribal and multi-ethnic...

We have important and diverse indigenous values and worldviews that contribute to the livability and uniqueness of Portland, and we see ourselves as part of its future.



Contributing Organizations

Bonneville Power Administration Tribal Affairs (BPA)
www.bpa.gov/corporate/About_BPA/tribes

Bow and Arrow Culture Club
503.380.6595

ChristieCare
www.christiecare.org • 503.635.3416

Concerned Indian Citizens
503.285.4474

Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians
503.238.1512

Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission (CRITFC)
www.critfc.org • 503.238.0667

Good Spirit
503.515.2053

Lewis & Clark, Indigenous Ways of Knowing Program
www.lclark.edu/~iwok • 503.768.6155

National Indian Child Welfare Association (NICWA)
www.nicwa.org • 503.222.4044

Native American Program, Legal Aid Services of Oregon (NAPOLS)
503.223.9483

Native American Youth and Family Center (NAYA Family Center) www.nayapdx.org
503.288.8177

Native People's Circle of Hope
www.nativepeoplescoh.org
503.970.8004

Northwest Indian Veterans Association
http://www.atnitribes.org/Veteran.html
360.696-4061 Ext 3413

Northwest Portland Area Indian Health Board (NPAIHB)
www.npaihb.org • 503.228.4185

ONABEN – A Native American Business Network
www.onaben.org • 503.968.1500

One Sky Center
www.oneskycenter.org • 503.494.3703

Oregon Native American Chamber
www.onacc.org

Pi Nee Waus
503.477.5629

Portland Indian Elders Association
ravart@pacifier.com
mizzbuckie@comcast.net
360.574.6164

Portland State University Institute for Tribal Government
www.tribalgov.pdx.edu • 503.725-9000

Portland Public Schools Title VII Indian Education
www.indianed.pps.k12.or.us
503.916.6499

Portland Youth and Elders Council
www.nayapdx.org • 503.288.8177

Tribal Leadership Forum
www.tribalgov.pdx.edu/forum.php
503.647.7734

Wisdom of the Elders
www.wisdomoftheelders.org

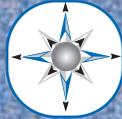


➤ Equity, continued from p.1.

We know that poverty is not the sole cause of inequality in our communities. Racism, sexism, ageism and ableism all have deep roots in our society and are among the sources of discrimination and inequality. Like poverty, all sources of inequality are like ecological systems, and it will take understanding the complex interactions underlying each community's unique history of inequality to find real solutions. This is what I have been learning over and over again through the Regional Equity Atlas Project: that we must reflect and take action in ways that account for the benefits of power and privilege, as well as the burdens of inequality. Moreover, we must work together as equal partners to arrive at effective and lasting solutions for moving us all forward.

For readers who are not familiar with it, CLF initiated the Regional Equity Atlas Project in 2002 with the goal of addressing the root causes of inequality in our region. The Project combines research, public education, organizing, and advocacy to achieve this goal. Drawing from this research and communities' ideas about appropriate solutions to address disparities highlighted in the *Equity Atlas*, CLF has formulated a set of initiatives—public policy ideas that will serve as a blueprint for community action. Broadly, the identified initiatives aim to create healthy social and physical environments, improve access to opportunities for building wealth, and institutionalize the assessment of health and equity impacts and outcomes in policymaking and planning processes. We'll be releasing the complete equity action agenda in the coming months.

In the meantime, this issue of *Connections* features several stories that can help us understand more fully what regional equity is all about. We hope they'll give you a deeper understanding of some of the positive things that are happening, as well as what needs to happen to improve equity in our region. *The Regional Equity Atlas* that was published in 2007 painted only part of the picture. Building a complete portrait of regional equity will require all of us sharing our stories about inequality and privilege and putting all of the pieces on the table so that we get smarter about solutions, and make sure nobody gets left behind in the future. ✨



We are thrilled to introduce two new members of the CLF crew.

Nuin-Tara Key is CLF's new LINKS AmeriCorps Outreach Coordinator. Nuin-Tara graduated from Lewis and Clark College with a degree in Political Science and while studying in Belfast, Northern Ireland she became interested in urban planning and the impacts of the built environment on civil society and community development. After returning to Portland, she interned at City Hall. Nuin-Tara is currently a graduate student at Portland State University, pursuing a Masters in Urban and Regional Planning. She is interested in the nexus between urban public policy and the perpetuation of spatial inequalities, and how urban planning can either serve to ameliorate or intensify social inequity.



Carie Faszholz is a CLF intern working on various administrative projects, including the Regional Equity Action Agenda and new member outreach. Carie is studying Whole Systems Design as a graduate student in the Center for Creative Change at Antioch University Seattle. A

Portland resident since 2002, Carie is interested in exploring cultural landscapes, specifically the ways in which residents experience the design of urban spaces. Carie has worked for many years in higher education as an academic programs administrator, and is truly appreciating her time as CLF's oldest student intern.

Wish list

Potted plants

Compact refrigerator (roughly 4 cubic ft)

Small stackable conference table chairs (8)

Compact folding table for events (4)

Two-drawer filing cabinets (3 total, one with lock)

Small rolling palettes for moving furniture

Building materials (See www.clfuture.org/involve/wishlist for details)

CLF welcomes our new members!

Food Front Cooperative Grocery
Livable North Portland
Multnomah County Health Equity Initiative
Sidney Lezak Project
We Are All Traffic

You are invited to subscribe to the clinfo electronic mail list.

Subscribers receive a weekly digest of action alerts and announcements from CLF member organizations.

To subscribe, send your email address to:

info@clfuture.org

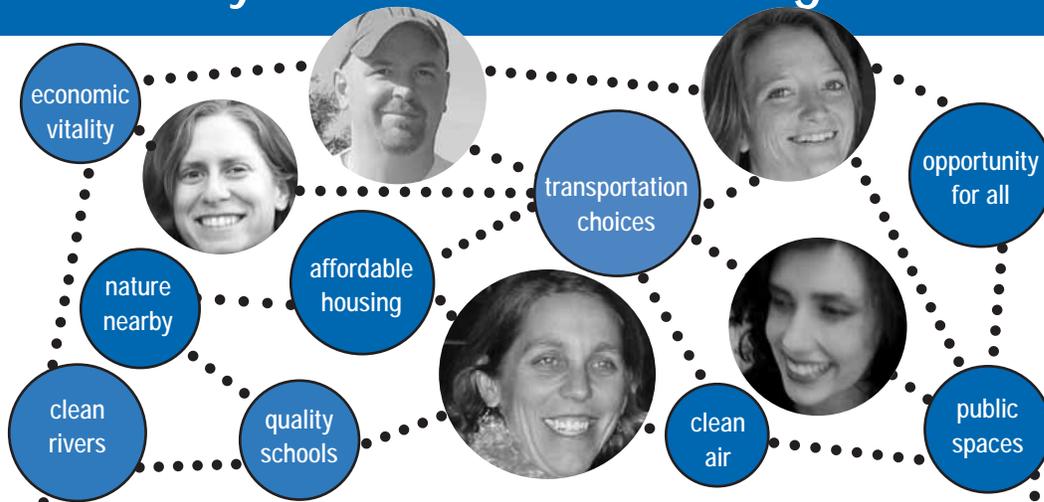
Visit www.clfuture.org to download past issues of *Connections* and other CLF publications.

CLF has new digs!



CLF relocated its office last spring to the Olympic Mills Commerce Center, an historic renovation project of CLF member, Beam Development. Our new address is: 107 SE Washington, Ste. 239, Portland, OR 97214. Come by anytime to say hello and check out the new space.

Livability...it's about connecting the dots.



The Coalition for a Livable Future Needs YOU to help connect the dots!

Connecting the dots may sound simple (you're picturing those dot-to-dot exercises from your childhood, right?). However, connecting the dots for livable communities is hard work. And, it's important work. **And, it takes all of us to make it happen.**

Take a moment to consider what connecting the dots for livability really means.

Connecting the dots means collaboration. Bringing people and organizations together to create and a common agenda for healthy communities.

Connecting the dots means translating and educating. Identifying the links between the issues so that we can break away from siloed thinking, and shift toward more holistic ways of understanding and addressing community concerns about how we design and invest in our region.

Connecting the dots means building power and leveraging. Organizing people and organizing information, focusing them toward a shared vision for lasting change.

Connecting the dots means innovation. Drawing on the collective talents, wisdom, and expertise of our diverse members, we identify fresh approaches to resolving complex problems.

The Coalition for a Livable Future connects the dots—the people, the places, the issues, the organizations—to ensure that people and nature thrive in our region. **But we can't do it without you.**

Please make a donation today, to support our vital work in building a sustainable future. By supporting CLF, you are making sure that the Portland region is a place where you and your children can be healthy and prosper. You are helping make the critical connections between the people and places that make up our region so that we can build a better future together.

Be part of the movement. Donate now.

— **The CLF team**

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to the sponsors of our 2008
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A Special Thanks to our Co-Hosts:
Portland State University College of
Urban and Public Affairs Social Equity and
Opportunity Forum
and
Sidney Lezak Project

CLF member organizations:

1000 Friends of Oregon
AARP Oregon
African American Health Coalition
Amallegory Productions
American Institute of Architects, Portland Chapter
American Society of Landscape Architects
Association of Oregon Rail and Transit Advocates
Audubon Society of Portland
Better People
Bicycle Transportation Alliance
Bike Gallery
Cascadia Behavioral HealthCare
Clackamas Community Land Trust
Collaboration
Columbia Group Sierra Club
Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission
Community Action Organization
Community Alliance of Tenants
Community Development Network
Community Development Student Group at
Portland State University
Community Health Partnership
The Community Housing Fund
Community Partnership for Affordable Housing, Inc.
Dana L. Brown Consulting
Ecotrust
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Fair Housing Council of Oregon
Fans of Fanno Creek
FMYI, Inc.
Food Front Cooperative Grocery
Fregonese Associates, Inc.
Friends of Arnold Creek
Friends of Clark County
Friends of Forest Park
Friends of Goal Five
Friends of Marquam Nature Park
Friends of Portland Community Gardens
Friends of Rock, Bronson and Willow Creeks
Friends of Smith and Bybee Lakes
Friends of Tryon Creek State Park
Gales Creek Insurance
Gerding Edlen
Growing Gardens
Hillsdale Neighborhood Association
Hot Lips Pizza
Humanists of Greater Portland
Jobs With Justice
Johnson Creek Watershed Council

Become a Monthly Supporter

Monthly giving is easy, convenient, and helps assure the longevity of CLF's work.

Please use the enclosed envelope to specify the amount you would like CLF to charge to your credit card each month.

Questions?
Call 503-294-2889.

The Coalition for a Livable Future appreciates the continued support of our funders! We would like to thank and acknowledge:

The Bullitt Foundation
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The Kaiser Permanente Community Fund at the
Northwest Health Foundation
Paul Allen Foundation
Rose Tucker Charitable Trust
Spirit Mountain Community Fund

Livability Sustainers Circle

(These leaders have made significant commitments of \$500+ to sustain CLF's work.)

Amallegory Productions, Inc.
Stan Amy & Christy Eugenis
John and Jane Emrick
Alan Locklear & Marie Valleroy
John Mullin & Ellen Whyte
Russell Development Company, Inc.
Bob Sallinger

Monthly Sustainers

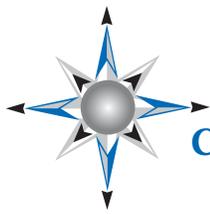
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Joe Gillock	Jeremy O'Leary	

Thanks to all of you!



THE OBJECTIVES OF THE COALITION FOR A LIVABLE FUTURE

- 1 Protecting, maintaining and restoring the social and economic health of our urban, suburban, and rural communities, especially the distressed parts of the region;**
 - (a) Preventing displacement of low and moderate income residents and people of color as neighborhoods improve;
 - (b) Assuring easy and equitable access to employment and affordable housing throughout the region;
 - (c) Promoting the preservation and development of housing affordable to low and moderate income residents throughout the region;
 - (d) Protecting, maintaining and encouraging the development of living wage jobs, small businesses, and community-based and sustainable economic development throughout the region;
 - (e) Reversing the polarization of income and raising income and opportunities for the region's low-income residents;
 - (f) Preserving and enhancing a high quality public education system for all parts of the region and all residents;
 - (g) Encouraging the development of food production, processing, and distribution strategies that contribute to the local economy and ensure access by all community members to healthful and affordable foods within each neighborhood;
- 2 Developing a more sustainable relationship between human residents and the ecosystems of this region;**
 - (a) Reducing consumption (particularly of non-renewable resources), pollution, and waste;
 - (b) Changing the patterns of urban expansion from low-density suburban sprawl, which relies on the automobile and wastes valuable farm and forest lands and other natural resources, to more compact neighborhoods with a mix of uses conveniently served by public transportation;
 - (c) Expanding transportation options, including reducing dependency on automobiles and vehicle miles traveled per capita and increasing transit, bike and walking opportunities throughout the region;
 - (d) Protecting, restoring and maintaining healthy watersheds, fish and wildlife and their habitats, greenspaces, and other natural resources within and outside urban growth boundaries;
 - (e) Ensuring that the built and natural environment are integrated in a sustainable manner that supports neighborhood livability and protects wetlands, streams, water quality, air quality and the natural landscape and recognizes that both natural resources and humans are part of the urban ecosystem;
 - (f) Addressing past, present and future issues of environmental equity including: the siting and cleanup of polluting industries and waste disposal sites, remediation of toxic waste sites and water pollution, and the distribution of neighborhood parks, trails, and greenspaces;
 - (g) Encouraging the development of food production, processing, and distribution systems that regenerate and support natural systems and biodiversity, enrich neighborhood development patterns, and build community;
- 3 Assuring the fair distribution of tax burdens and government investment within the region;**
- 4 Promoting a diverse and tolerant society;**
- 5 Increasing public understanding of these regional growth management issues, developing effective democratic discourse, and promoting broader citizen participation in decision-making regarding growth in our region.**

CLF member organizations:

Kaiser Permanente
League of Women Voters of the
Columbia River Region
Livable North Portland
Livable Place
Mercy Corps Northwest
Multnomah County Health Equity Initiative
National Association of Social Workers,
Oregon Chapter
National Charrette Institute
Norm Thompson
Northwest Housing Alternatives
Oregon Council of Trout Unlimited
Oregon Environmental Council
Oregon Food Bank
Oregon Sustainable Agriculture Land Trust
Otak
People for Parks Oregon
People's Food Co-op
Portfolio 21
Portland Community Land Trust
Portland Community Reinvestment Initiatives
Portland General Electric
Portland Housing Center
Portland Impact
Rachel's Friends Breast Cancer Coalition
REACH Community Development Corporation
ROSE Community Development Corporation
SEIU Local 49
Sidney Lezak Project
Sisters of the Road Cafe
Social Services of Clackamas County
Sorin Garber Consulting
Southeast Uplift Neighborhood Program
Sunnyside United Methodist Church
The Enterprise Foundation
The Justice and Peace Commission of
St. Ignatius Catholic Church
The Urban League of Portland
The Wetlands Conservancy
Try On Life Community Farm
Tualatin Riverkeepers
Tualatin Valley Housing Partners
Turtle Island Development, LLC
Urban Greenspaces Institute
WaterWatch of Oregon
We Are All Traffic
Wells Fargo
Willamette Pedestrian Coalition
Willamette Riverkeeper
Williams & Dame Development
Woodlawn Neighborhood Association
Zipcar

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Community-minded businesses
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Coalition for a Livable Future.
To request an informational packet,
please call 503-294-2889 or email
ron@clfuture.org.

Positions on 2008 Ballot Measures The Boons and the Boondoggles

LOCAL: Tualatin Hills Parks and Recreation District Bond Measures 34-156 YES

Protects streams, natural Areas, and wildlife habitat by providing \$100 million to allow THPRD to meet environmental challenges and increased park needs associated with population growth.

STATEWIDE:

Measure 56 YES

Removes the unfair double majority requirement, allowing measures to pass if the majority of voters support it.

Measure 58 NO

Prohibits teaching in any language but English after one to two years, creating obstacles for children to learn.

Measure 59 NO

Creates an unlimited federal deduction on state tax return, providing tax breaks only for the wealthiest Oregonians, while middle and low-income families save less than a dollar a year.

Measure 61 NO

Creates stiff mandatory prison sentences, at a huge human and financial cost. Costs hundreds of millions of dollars, includes no funding for drug treatment, and will lead to huge numbers of incarcerations.

Measure 62 NO

Diverts lottery revenues from education, job creation, and the environment to public safety, directly harming education, job creation and economic development programs, and likely leading to fewer funds for social service and environmental programs.

Measure 63 NO

Allows property owners to make improvements valued up to \$35,000 per year without safety inspections or building permits, leading to dangerous conditions that put people's safety at risk.

Measure 64 NO

Prohibits voluntary payroll deductions, small donations to charities through the charitable check-off, and food drives on public property.



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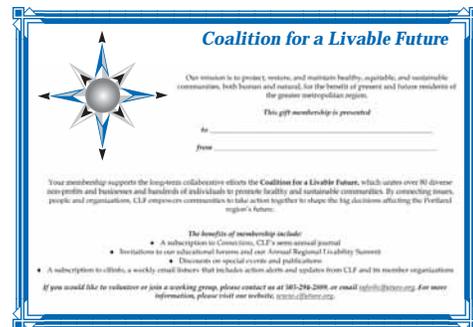
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Our Mission

The purpose of the Coalition for a Livable Future is to protect, restore, and maintain healthy, equitable, and sustainable communities, both human and natural, for the benefit of present and future residents of the greater metropolitan region.

Coalition for a Livable Future

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