

American Planning Association—  
San Francisco State University  
Client Project

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**Sustainability  
Planning Inventory  
and Guide—  
Preliminary Results**

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## **Client**

- Problem Definition
- Project Goal

## **What is Sustainability?**

- The Natural Step

## **Building an Inventory**

- Benchmark Cases
- Innovative Examples

## **Observations**

# Client



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American Planning Association California Chapter  
Northern Section Sustainability Committee



# Problem Definition

To *increase* and  
*accelerate* effective  
sustainability planning  
in the California  
Chapter, Northern  
Section



# Project Goals



- Build an inventory of sustainable plans and projects
- Provide an overview of the state of sustainability planning in the Northern Section
- Create the foundation for a Learning and Practice Network of California planners

# Background of Sustainability



- Many definitions. Many approaches. Many scales.
- Focus and effectiveness varies.
- The founding definition (Brundtland) and 3 key approaches to sustainable urban development take us part way, but not all the way.
  - Brundtland Commission
  - New Urbanism\*
  - Smart Growth\*
  - The Eco City\*

\* Jepson, Edward, [How Possible is Sustainable Urban Development](#), Planning Practice & Research, V25, No4, pp 417-437, August 2010.

# Background – 14 Key Land Use Principles of Sustainable Communities\*



1. Jobs-Housing Balance
2. Spatial integration of employment and transportation
3. Mixed land use
4. Use of locally-produced, clean, and renewable energy
5. Energy and resource efficient building and site design
6. Pedestrian access (walking & biking) to work and leisure
7. Housing affordability (for all)
8. Housing diversity (style, type, tenure)
9. Higher density residential
10. Protection of natural and biological functions and processes
11. Resident involvement and empowerment
12. Social spaces (public spaces to encourage social gathering)
13. Sense of place
14. Inter-modal transportation connectivity

\* Jepson, 2010.

# The Natural Step— A Principle-Based, Minimum Definition\*

**In a sustainable society,**

• **NATURE** is not subject to systematically increasing...



...concentrations of substances  
extracted from the Earth's crust  
(**lead, mercury, cadmium**),



...concentrations of substances  
produced by society (**persistent  
compounds**),



...degradation by physical means  
(**ecosystem destruction**),

• and **PEOPLE** are not subject to...



...conditions that **systematically  
undermine their capacity to  
meet their needs.**

To create a sustainable  
organization or community,

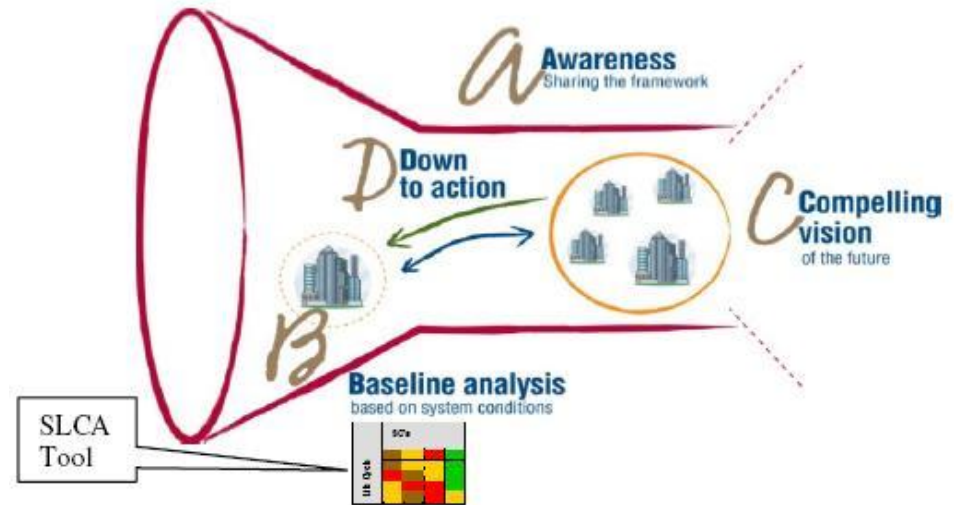
Add “*eliminate our  
contribution to . . .*”

**Use as a COMPASS for direction and a LENS for evaluation**

\* Collective commons attribution: TNS, 2010.

# The Natural Step—A strategic sustainability “gap” planning methodology

- The ABCD method
  - Awareness
  - Baseline Analysis
  - Compelling Vision
  - Down to Action



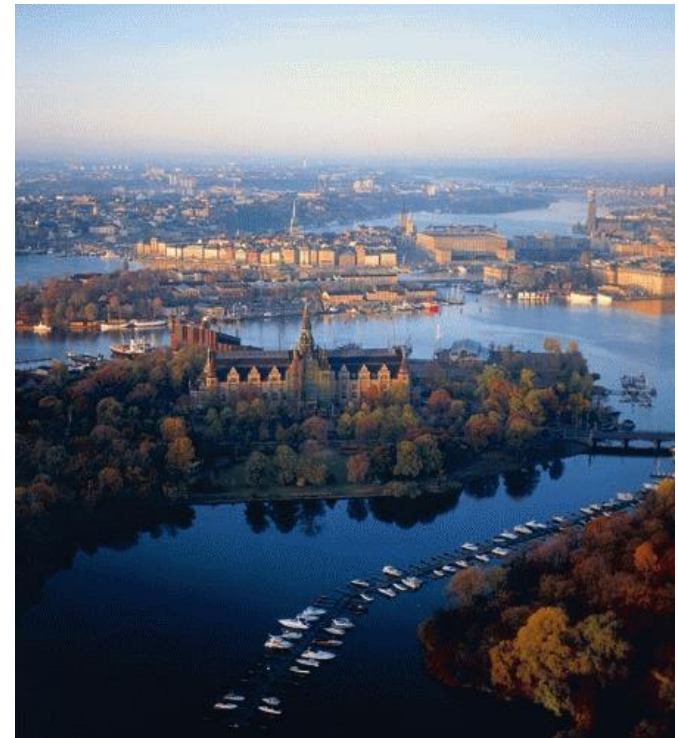
- Informed by 4 Principles
- Gap between Vision & Baseline drives on-going innovation to eliminate systems conditions violations and achieve ultimate sustainability.

• \* *Collective commons attribution: TNS, 2010.*

# Benchmark Cases

To understand the state of the art, examined leading-edge cases:

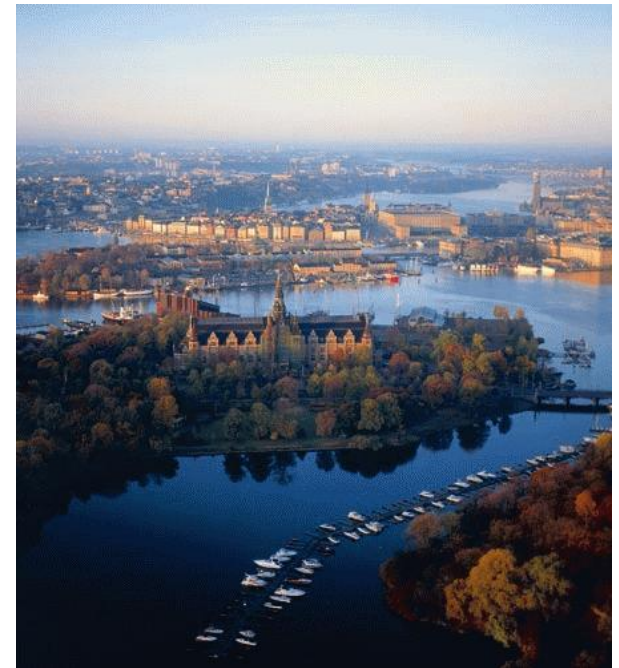
- Sonoma, California
- Whistler, Canada
- Melbourne, Australia
- Stockholm, Sweden
- Portland, Oregon
- Portsmouth, New Hampshire



# Benchmark Cases

Key characteristics of innovative sustainability planning, include:

- Ambitious goals
  - Zero Carbon – Zero Waste
- Strategic approach
- Innovation
- Multi-stakeholder processes
- Renewables
- Density+Design+Land Use
- Scale integration – Eco districts

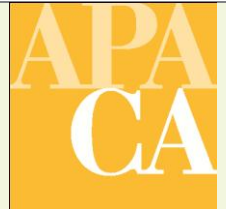


# Methodology for Inventory

- 16 Northern Section Counties
- Major Cities
- Identified sustainability plans, programs and policies – What's going on?
- Assessed leading-edge cases for key characteristics.



# Inventory of Sustainability Plans



County	City	Population	Name	Transportation	Energy	Water	Waste	Recycling	Building	
Sonoma County		483,878	Green Business Program							
			Sonoma County Climate Action Plan							
			Climate Protection Action Plan							
			Energy and Sustainability Programs	1	2					
		Sustainable Energy Practices for Public Agencies	1	1	1	1				
		Santa Rosa	155,796	Community Climate Action Plan (Sonoma County)						
				Build it Green						1
				Environmentally Preferable Purchasing Policy		1	1	1	1	1
Biosolids Management System					1	1				
			2010 Urban Water Management Plan			1				
			Water Waste Ordinance			1				

# Innovative Projects

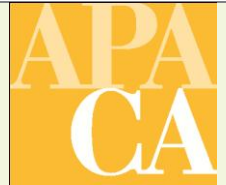


- Oakland Bicycle Master Plan
- San Jose Green Vision
- Hercules Transit Village
- Sonoma Mountain Village

# Oakland Free Broadway Shuttle



# Oakland Free Broadway Shuttle

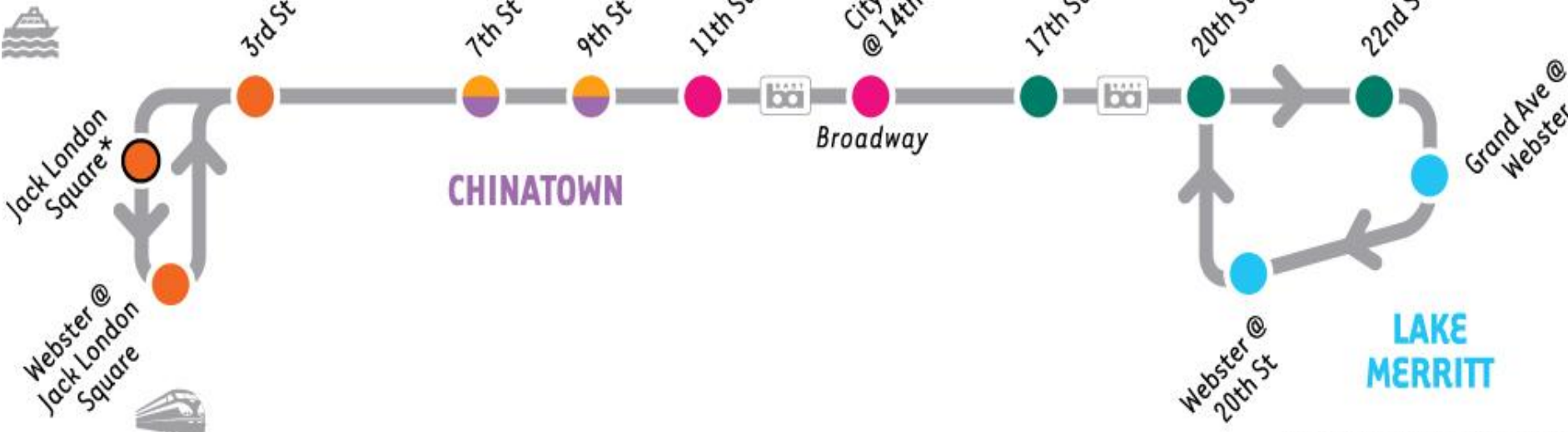


**JACK LONDON**

**OLD OAKLAND**

**CITY CENTER**

**UPTOWN**

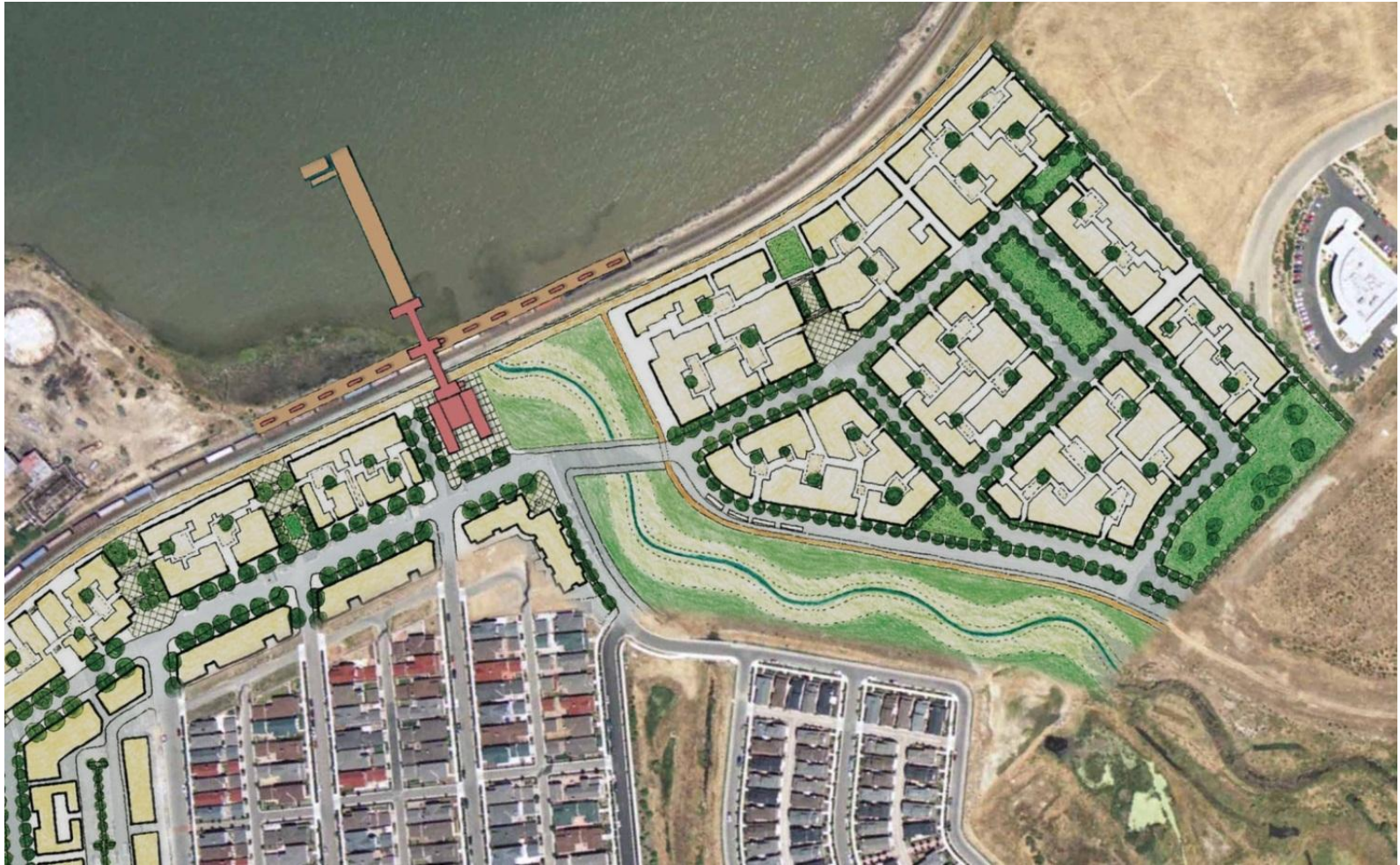


Map by Nelson\Nygaard (nelsonnygaard.com) and City of Oakland

# San Jose Green Vision



# Hercules Transit Village



# Sonoma Mountain Village



Zero Carbon, Zero Waste, 5-Minute City

# Observations – Current sustainability planning . . .



Occurs mostly as tactical initiatives within the traditional arenas of environmental and urban planning.

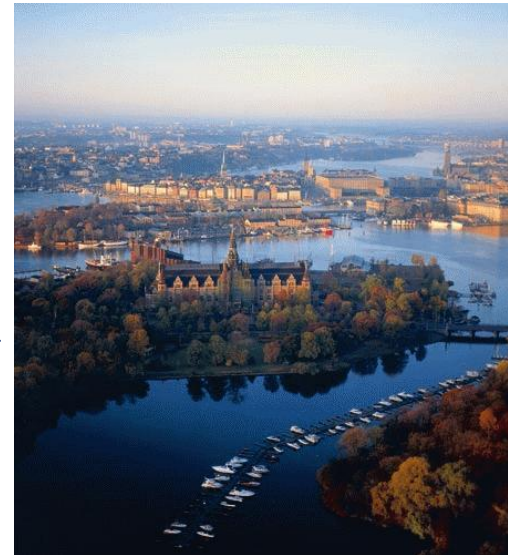
- Transportation
- Energy
- Water
- Air Quality
- Green Building
- Zero Waste
- Recycling
- Climate Action Plans
- Green Business

# Observations:

## Next Step--amplify innovation with . . .



- Strategic sustainability training
- Principle-based definition
- Backcasting from success principles
- On-going Stakeholder dialogue & engagement
- On-going innovation to eliminate systems conditions violations
- Integration with economy
  - risk reduction
  - new value creation
  - Create new prosperity of ecological economy
- Becoming a restorative community

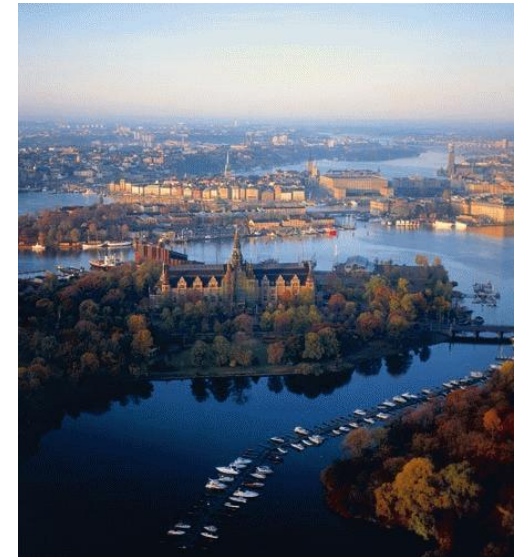


# Observations:

## Applications for Planners/Departments



- ***Deepen*** strategic understanding and capacity to think rigorously about sustainability
- ***Cultivate*** stakeholder sustainability dialogue
- ***Green*** a current project
- ***Green*** the Dept. work program
- ***Green*** Dept. operations
- ***Green*** zoning, regulations, plans
- ***Green*** the General Plan
- ***Green*** City operations
- ***Undertake*** on-going multi-stakeholder sustainability planning & implementation initiative



# THANK YOU! Questions?



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## Resources:

Jepson, J. Edward Jr., Mary M. Edwards, [How Possible is Sustainable Urban Development](#), *Planning Practice & Research*, V25, No4, pp 417-437, August 2010.

... But it's worth the effort and gets easier!