Chapter 1 : Audubon International - Sustainable Communities Program

Sustainable communities allocate resources and opportunities fairly so that all people who do the full range of jobs that a community needs can thrive in it. Local governments in these communities actively eliminate barriers to full participation in community life and work to correct past injustices.

But what is a sustainable community? Why do neighbourhoods matter and why is sustainability important? What are the implications of debates around sustainability for community policy and practice? World Commission on Environment and Development Debates around the desirability and possibilities of sustainable communities take place against the background of four linked phenomenon: In short, there has been a fundamental shift in the way that many people relate to, and experience, the world. As a planet we are living beyond our means. We have not been able to create on any scale ways of living in the world that allow people to share properly, and that do not damage the well-being of future generations. In this piece we want to explore this background and then look at what might be involved in a sustainable community â€" and the associated notion of an enduring neighbourhood. In the conclusion we examine some possibilities for local action. The background To begin it is worth reminding ourselves of the impact of climate change, urbanization, economic growth and globalization. Most of the warming that has occurred over the last 50 years is, according to the IPCC , attributable to human activities. The result of this will be a further rise in sea levels and an increased risk of flooding , problems around fresh-water supplies in many parts of the world, a decrease in agricultural productivity in many areas, and significant health risks. The Stern Review concluded that climate change presents very serious global risks, and it demands an urgent global response. It will impact disproportionately on poorer countries â€" but even in richer countries, if nothing is done there will be profound economic consequences. In Europe and north America over 80 per cent of the population already live in urban areas. There is also rapid change happening elsewhere in the world. Within a couple of years the urban population of the earth will outnumber the rural Davis In there were 86 cities in the world with a population of more than one million; today there are , and by there will be at least Cities, indeed, have absorbed nearly two-thirds of the global population explosion since , and are currently growing by a million babies and migrants each week. The global countryside meanwhile, has reached its maximum population and will begin to shrink after As a result cities will account for virtually all future world population growth, which is expected to peak at about 10 billion in The movement has involved a huge growth in the number of people living in slums over one billion in the South according the United Nations UN-Habitat It is also not sustainable under current conditions. As Herbert Girardet For a century or more the overwhelming majority of states have placed the highest priority upon economic growth. Political thought has become locked into what J. The result has been a large increase in industrial production and in the consumption of non-renewable resources. This, in turn, has also contributed significantly to global warming. While there are all sorts of debates around the figures, it is clear that with exponential economic growth, the exhaustion of mineral and energy resources becomes a real possibility within a century or so. Furthermore, the benefits of growth have not been shared equally. There is a crisis of inequality with a widening gap between rich and poor in most countries World Bank Globalization â€" the spread and connectedness of production, communication and technologies across the world â€" has been developing for centuries. However, many believe the current situation is of a fundamentally different order to what has gone before. With increased economic interconnection has come deep-seated political changes. There has also been a shift in power away from the nation state and toward, some argue, multinational corporations. These linked phenomenon help to explain why sustainability has come onto the political agenda. If nothing else the economic risks of inaction around climate change, as the Stern Review pointed out, are so huge that even the most sceptical industrialists and financiers are realizing that there is a problem to address. The former would fit in with what we might now describe as the mainstream of politics in many northern countries; the latter represents a greener and more holistic vision. It echoes the concerns of E. Schumacher when he argued for a concern with appropriate scale, wholeness and connectedness. The vast bulk of writing about sustainable communities is concerned with

place. What is often meant by community in these discussions is actually a particular area. Here, as we will see below, it is probably most helpful to think in terms of neighbourhood. In many towns and cities neighbourhoods blend into each other â€" the result of many years of development and change. Where one neighbourhood begins and another ends can be a matter of fierce debate amongst locals. Three other things about neighbourhoods are also worth noting at this point and here we are following Barton First, planners will often view neighbourhoods essentially as a setting for a particular function e. Second, people will often associate particular experiences, hopes and values to an area. This sense of localness and distinctiveness provides us with a sense of place. Last, a neighbourhood might well provide hook for feelings of community and the setting for the sorts of relationships and networks that we call community. To help focus our discussion we have taken a provisional definition of a sustainable city from Herbert Girardet. By city he is actually talking about all significant human settlements. It places people and their long term needs at the centre. Good quality air and water, health food and good housing. Good quality education, a vibrant culture, good health care, satisfying employment or occupations and a sharing of wealth. Safety in public places, equal opportunities, freedom of expression and catering for the needs of the young, the old and the disabled. This is clearly a greener, and more inclusive approach to sustainability than exists within the current policies of most countries see below. It looks to the environment and to economics and to social relationships and social justice. As such it is a more hopeful vision â€" and this, we believe, is vital to education and community development. Without hope, we easily lose direction and the capacity to find it. Sprawl Sprawl â€" the spreading out of cities and towns over the land surrounding them â€" has created major problems with regard to sustainability and community. Places characterized by sprawl tend to be highly energy-inefficient Giradet They use significantly more resources than urban living. In the United States, for example, it has been calculated that areas of suburban sprawl use five times more pipe and wire, five times as much heating and cooling energy. Unfortunately, it has been the main pattern of growth in North America and the UK. Unlike the traditional neighbourhood model, which evolved organically as a response to human needs, suburban sprawl is an idealized artificial system. It is not without a certain beauty: Its performance is largely predictable. It is an outgrowth of modern problem-solving: Unfortunately, this system is showing itself to be unsustainable. Unlike the traditional neighbourhood, sprawl is not healthy growth; it is essentially self-destructive. Even at relatively low population densities, sprawl tends not to pay for itself financially and consumes land at an alarming rate, while producing insurmountable traffic problems and exacerbating social inequity and isolationâ€¦ As the ring of suburbia grows around most of our cities, so grows the void at the centre. Building at a relatively low density has a major impact on the sort of services that can be offered. Indeed in many areas there are too few people to keep services going. The English Urban Task Force showed that living at greater densities â€" along the lines of traditional patterns â€" can make communities more sustainable and viable. As Rogers and Power Furthermore, the lower the density of building in an area, the less economical it becomes to provide public transport to it. There has been a further casualty of sprawl â€" social capital and local community life. They travel much further to work, shop and enjoy leisure opportunities. As a result there is less time available and less inclination to become involved in local groups and networks. Furthermore, the relative distance between people has further encouraged privatized living â€" association which underpins civic life requires density of contacts in institutions and public spaces Rogers and Power One of the notions linked to their work has been that of livability â€" how people perceive the environmental and social quality of an area. The separate-use zoning codes that shape sprawling exurban areas make it impossible to do anything but drive between all important destinations â€" home, work, school, stores and cultural destinations. Compact urbanism brings many of those locations within walking distance and urban densities support high-quality transit service, giving people convenient lower-impact ways of getting around. Even better, New Urbanism makes these features part of environments recognized for their livability, desirability and sense of place. Each neighbourhood needs a clear centre â€" a place where we can find shops, commerce, social and cultural activities and government offices. The five minute walk. A street pattern should take the form of a continuous web with paths linking one place to another. In suburbia things are more spread out, and linear. This means that people do not have the same incentive to walk, nor the same flexible and

choice about routes. Where there are a larger number of streets as in a traditional neighbourhood pattern it means that traffic can be shared and streets smaller. In suburbia areas are often zoned â€" residential areas are kept separate from industrial areas, these in turn are separated from commercial areas. In the traditional neighbourhood pattern the buildings on a streets are classically used for different purposes. Special sites for special buildings. Traditional neighbourhoods usually make a special place for civic buildings â€" libraries, schools, town and city halls, places of worship. The quest for more sustainable communities â€" neighbourhoods that will endure and are livable â€" requires that we look to qualities such as these and to explore what can be done both in the suburbs and cities to reinvigorate areas. In the case of the latter, Rogers and Power Compact cities work on four axes: Creating vibrant, dense centres; Organizing accessible public transport across cities; and Protecting and enhancing the environment.

Chapter 2 : Sustainable Communities | California Air Resources Board

The term "sustainable communities" has various definitions, but in essence refers to communities planned, built, or modified to promote sustainable calendrierdelascience.comnable communities tend to focus on environmental and economic sustainability, urban infrastructure, social equity, and municipal government.

Coordinate policies and leverage investment Value communities and neighborhoods Along with working collaboratively, these government agencies also have their own initiatives. They also work to standardize energy efficiency standards across federal agencies, as well as expand the availability of financing for home energy improvements and multifamily housing. The Environmental Protection Agency has a Smart Growth Program which conducts research, publishes reports, showcases outstanding communities, and works with communities through grants and technical assistance. The tool kit is arranged in a five-step program which allows communities to: Case Studies from the Partnership for Sustainable Communities[edit] The Euclid Corridor in Cleveland Once a thriving place of business and home to the wealthy and elite, Euclid Avenue in Cleveland had seen a decline in commerce following the Great Depression. During this economic downturn, Cleveland became a shrinking city as many of its residents moved and homes were turned into boarding houses or abandoned altogether.. After decades of work by city leaders and residents to revitalize this part of the city, the bus line HealthLine debuted in This created thousands of square feet of retail space and thousands of jobs. EPA assisted with the redevelopment of abandoned space through their brownfield assessment grants and HUD provided mortgage insurance on properties to aid in the development of Euclid Avenue. The HUD provided a loan to encourage economic growth, specifically through the conversion of an old cotton warehouse into an area of retail shops, offices, and restaurants known as West End Market. The success of West End Market led to building permits being issued around the area in a three-year period, resulting in a successful arts district that created jobs as well as drew tourists and locals. The city also worked with the Federal Highway Administration in demolishing an unnecessary bridge which allowed for the development of a recreational area with a cross bridge, waterfalls, and walking paths, known as Falls Park on the Reedy. In , a mixed-use development was constructed across from Falls Park with a hotel, apartments, restaurants, and retail and office spaces to help further spark economic growth in the area. An integral part to this transformation was the creation of a street car service, partially funded by the Federal Transit Administration. The streetcar encouraged both Amazon. The City of Seattle is proposing a zoning change to promote affordable housing and attract market rate development. HUD provided grants to fund building and support services for the chronically homeless, adults and veterans recovering from addiction, and homeless with mental health issues and substance abuse problems. This law allows for Maryland counties and municipalities to use funds generated from increased property tax values to fund improvement projects in sustainable communities. Sample projects include expanding sidewalks, the development of tree planting on streets and parks, as well as improvements to water and sewer infrastructure to help encourage economic growth and improve quality of life. The law aims to reduce greenhouse gas emissions through transportation, housing, and land use planning. Under the SB , the state is broken up into Metropolitan Planning Organizations which are each responsible for developing Sustainable Community Strategies that will help the state reach its goal of reduced emissions. These divisions of government have the authority to affect environmental and ecological results. When looking at and comparing sustainable cities certain indicators may be used: Companies must prove that their endeavors are harmless to the community instead of the community having to prove they have been harmed by company endeavors. The city of Quebec to create a sustainable community through political involvement has dedicated studies to discovering why citizens are or are not politically active. When citizens lack the internal belief that one can make change in government and the external belief that the government will make changes according to citizen concerns, political participation dwindles as citizens believe no change will occur. Kunin, leads community based projects around the globe that address environmental, economic, and social issues. Many also offer plans and guidance on improving the sustainability of various practices, such as land use and community design, green transportation, energy

efficiency, waste reduction, and climate friendly purchasing. These thinkers examine economic and ethical issues faced in protecting and enhancing our environments and make recommendations on restoration techniques that aid in promoting social justice. They also call for a major and imperative paradigm shift in order to ensure good quality of life for many future generations. The movement suggests that allowing shorter work days and longer vacations would in turn help better distribute work, while also reducing stress and making for healthier living. Additionally, people would have more free time to make more rewarding and sustainable choices for themselves. The Voluntary Simplicity Movement suggests that one should focus on cultivating their own best inner being rather than focus on making material gains and wealth. It also promotes activism within the community to create engaged, educated citizens. The Degrowth movement is based on anti-consumerist and anti-capitalist ideas, focusing on reducing consumption and promoting happy, healthy lifestyles in non-consumptive fashions. Main aspects of Degrowth include more equal distribution of workload and sharing work, consuming less, and setting aside time for personal and cultural growth through the arts and creativity [32] Movements such as ecovillages are gathering momentum, spreading sustainable community ideas around the world, teaching through example and also offering classes and training on sustainable living, permaculture , and local economics. Ecovillages seek to integrate themselves harmlessly into the ecosystem surrounding them, so as to live and interact in a way that is sustainable and supportive of the natural world [33] Challenges and critiques[edit] Sustainable communities, both as individual projects and as a whole, have faced challenges impeding their development and have been met with criticism. Sustainable communities projects have struggled to take hold for: Additionally, sustainable communities reject the notion that development itself is fundamentally socially divisive or environmentally destructive.

Chapter 3 : Sustainable Communities

The Sustainable Communities Network website connects citizens with the resources they need to implement innovative processes and programs to restore the economic, environmental, and social health and vitality of their communities.

Local solutions to global problems Begin by opening your learning journal for this activity. Four communities that are making plans and moving towards local sustainability are explored in this activity. Each case study is presented in two parts. Part 1 summarises a local problem â€" and invites you to take the role of a member of that community. Your task is to analyse the problem and then use principles of sustainable community development to suggest possible solutions. Part 2 describes what the real community actually did to solve the problem. The case studies are on three themes: Built in by Francisco Vela, it models in detail the topography of this rugged country. A hydraulic system brings the rivers, lakes and oceans to life for the visitor. Like other developing country cities, Guatemala City grew very quickly during the s. Its population almost doubled in under 40 years, from , in to , in , and the metropolitan region is even larger, comprising approximately 3 million people. A large portion of the residents live in precarious and illegal squatter settlements. These have grown up because there is not enough housing for all the new arrivals to the city in the legal neighbourhoods. The residents of the squatter settlements have no legal rights to the land, pay no taxes, and receive no city services. Their homes are without water or toilets. Most residents obtain their water from a few public taps or from privately owned water trucks. Water purchased from these trucks is often contaminated. Because they do not own their own homes, most residents cannot obtain credit to invest in improving housing standards and infrastructure. Because of poor living conditions, including the lack of clean water and the consumption of contaminated water, people in these settlements suffer many health problems. Prime among them is the high incidence of often fatal diarrhoeal diseases. A study found that the prevalence of acute diarrhoeal diseases and acute respiratory infections in precarious settlements was more than twice as high as in the rest of the city. Many residents are not aware of the relationship between their living conditions and health problems. If you were the mayor of Guatemala City, what would you encourage the city council to do about conditions in the squatter settlements? How can running water be supplied even though you do not have money for standard water mains and the people do not have enough money to pay taxes? You do not have to get water into every home. What would you do to improve health conditions in these settlements? Who might you turn to for help in these endeavours, locally, nationally, globally. Working with the French organisation, Medecins sans Frontieres Doctors Without Borders , and with a community association, UNICEF purchased and helped distribute the construction materials for 13 community water taps, which were installed by local volunteers. Student nurses went door to door dispensing antiparasitic medicines to children. Soon after the pipes were laid in El Mezquital, a change in city government provided the opportunity for a more broad-based effort to address similar problems in other settlements. Community volunteers were trained to conduct surveys to determine the extent of the health problems. Volunteers were also taught how and why diarrhoea occurs and how to prevent children from being infected. As the community members learned more about the health impacts, they became strongly motivated to help improve their living conditions. Two different models for improved water supply were developed: In Chinautla one neighbourhood of Guatemala City , residents asked the city to install the single-source water tank. Such units are usually installed only on a temporary basis at construction sites. From this single source, the community created a supply network to reach individual residences. UNICEF provided the funds for the pipes and other materials, and each family provided its own home connection. The local community association receives the bill from the water company, and it collects payment from residents for the water they have used. A resident chosen by the community from residents is set aside for maintenance, and any surplus will go toward other local infrastructure needs such as drains and sewers. Although the cost of the water is more than the cost of households connected to the city water system, it is still far less than the exorbitant rates the private trucks had charged. Summarise the principles of sustainable community development that were followed in Guatemala City. Located in a rich agricultural valley, Cali is an industrial and commercial centre for the South American country. In another part of the

Americas, far to the north of Cali, Because housing issues are so different in developing versus developed countries, this case study concentrates on a neighbourhood in each of these cities: Cali Although the overall environmental quality in Cali is good, many residents live in extreme poverty in illegal squatter settlements. Because these communities have sprung up on government-owned or privately owned land without the required permits, they lack basic services such as water, sewage, electricity, roads and garbage collection. Schools and primary health care are also lacking. One such district is Aguablanca, a settlement of , residents covering acres hectares. Aguablanca attracted large numbers of people looking for a better place to live after a series of natural disasters and political upheavals in the s. Building a house or even improving an existing structure was very expensive because middlemen had inflated the prices of the only construction materials available locally. If you were the mayor of Cali, what practical steps would you take to address the housing problems in Aguablanca? As mayor of Cali, what do you think the role of the Aguablanca residents should be in solving their problems? Besides the residents themselves, who else people or organisations might need to be involved in these efforts? What would they do? What obstacles might you encounter? How would you deal with them? The Bronx Many areas of the Bronx present alarming scenes of urban environmental deterioration. The crime rate is high in these depressed surroundings. The neighbourhoods cry out for redevelopment. In , residents of Melrose Commons in the South Bronx discovered that the city was planning to revitalise their neighbourhood, which is home to some people, primarily of African-American and Latino descent. But the City Planning Department had been working on the plan since and had sought almost no community participation. A few residents were outraged that people who had stayed in the community through thick and thin would be rewarded with the loss of their homes. They were also frustrated that the plan was developed by people who did not live in or know the neighbourhood. If that did not work, what else would you try? As a Melrose Commons resident, what would you like to see your community become? What sorts of residential and commercial buildings, parks and streets would provide an environment that is enjoyable to live in? Part 2 â€" Solutions For Local Sustainability Cali The mayor of Cali worked with the Carvajal Foundation, a local philanthropic organisation, to develop a program to help the people of Aguablanca help themselves. The Foundation provided the leadership for the program and co-ordinated the efforts of government, private business, and the residents of the community. The Foundation built a warehouse in the middle of the squatter area and encouraged manufacturers to sell building materials to residents at wholesale prices. Because few of the residents understood basic building concepts, they often purchased the wrong types of materials or used them incorrectly. So the Foundation invited architecture students to come up with plans for a sound, simple, modular house design that residents could use. Residents could start with a single space and a bathroom and then expand into a fully developed house as resources allowed. Designs for a house with a workshop and a house with a small store were also developed. The Foundation also got the city to approve building plans and set up an office at the warehouse where residents could get building permits. A government-owned bank opened an office where residents could start savings accounts and obtain construction loans. The bank helped families evaluate their financial resources and decide how much space they could afford initially. They were taught how to read blueprints and how to build foundations, walls, and roofs and install plumbing and wiring. The success of the original program has inspired similar developments in other parts of the city. Identify the principles of sustainable community development that were followed in Cali City. In one year, the group had meetings, and each week it sent out about faxes to city officials. The original plan was withdrawn by the city, and the Nos Quedamos Committee became the focal point of a revised plan. The revised plan includes many varied spaces that cater for different ages and different purposes that are more easily kept safe. The original plan proposed a middle-income community with units of small, attached houses over 30 blocks. One key to the plan was the use of six-to-eight story mixed use buildings with stores at the street level and apartments above. Residents felt that such buildings would provide enough people on the streets and in the stores to help make the neighbourhood safe. Another key was to minimise the displacement of residents. Under the original plan, about 78 families and 80 businesses were to be moved out of the area; under the new plan, about 55 families and 51 businesses would have to move, but almost all would be given top priority for new homes and stores within the community. By mid the new plan had been approved by all the necessary parties. The first

phase of the project will include all of the building types proposed for the larger development and can thus serve as a model for subsequent development. Identify the principles of sustainable community development that were followed in The Bronx. Just outside of the downtown area in Minneapolis lives the most culturally diverse community in Minnesota. More than ethnic groups are represented in the Phillips neighbourhood. Combating Environmental Racism For over a decade, the city and county have wanted to build a large county garbage transfer station in the Phillips neighbourhood. Residents were against this project from the beginning, for several reasons: They believed it was an inappropriate land use for a residential neighbourhood. The site was one block away from six restaurants, a nursing home, and residential homes and two blocks away from a high school. The Phillips neighbourhood had already experienced heavy environmental impacts, as evidenced by the high percentage of lead poisoning cases in children. The Phillips neighbourhood could not tolerate an increase in truck traffic.

Chapter 4 : 5 thriving, sustainable communities | MNN - Mother Nature Network

5 thriving, sustainable communities These modern neighborhoods rely on the age-old principle of cooperation for food, shelter, culture and social change.

Chapter 5 : Sustainable Communities Online

Sustainable Communities Back To All Topics By coordinating transportation and land use planning to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, California is working not only towards more sustainable communities, but healthier and more livable ones, as well.

Chapter 6 : Sustainable Community | Inhabitat - Green Design, Innovation, Architecture, Green Building

First, Sustainable Communities are environmentally sustainable in terms of cleanliness and efficiency. Second, Sustainable communities are resilient to social, economic, and natural shocks. They are well prepared for natural disasters, which are increasing in intensity and frequency due to climate change.

Chapter 7 : calendrierdelascience.com | sustainable communities and neighbourhoods. theory, policy and

"Sustainable community development is the ability to make development choices which respect the relationship between the three "E's"-economy, ecology, and equity: Economy - Economic activity should serve the common good, be self-renewing, and build local assets and self-reliance.

Chapter 8 : Sustainable Communities | VNRC

Scientific American is the essential guide to the most awe-inspiring advances in science and technology, explaining how they change our understanding of the world and shape our lives.

Chapter 9 : What is a Sustainable Community? | STAR Communities

Sustainable Communities. In , Governor O'Malley signed into law Smart, Green and Growing legislation (House Bill , session, "The Sustainable Communities Act of ") passed by the Maryland General Assembly to enhance the future of growth, development and sustainability in Maryland.