

# LOCAL GOVERNMENTS AND THE SHARING ECONOMY REPORT

## Webinar Transcript

Presented on 24 November 2015 by Lead Authors Rosemary Cooper and Vanessa Timmer, [One Earth](#) Local Governments and the Sharing Economy - [localgovsharingecon.com](http://localgovsharingecon.com)

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### Webinar Outline:

- Welcome and Introduction (Time - 00:01)
- Example of city responses #1: Airbnb and Shared Spaces (Time - 06:29)
- Example of city responses #2: Tool Libraries, Fix-It Clinics and Community Sharing (Time - 12:25)
- Report Key Messages (including Addressing Data Gaps) and Sharing Economy Definition (Time - 19:22)
- Local Government Roles; Sustainability Filter (Time - 34:45)
- Shared Goods: Applying the Sustainability Filter Example #1 (Time - 38:56)
- Shared Energy: Applying the Sustainability Filter Example #2 (Time - 40:41)
- Shared Mobility: Applying the Sustainability Filter Example #3 (Time - 41:43)
- Strategic Opportunities; Sharing Economy Resources (Time - 52:25)
- Local Government Representatives share their reflections on the report and the Sharing Economy (Time - 54:03)
- Questions & Answers and Closing (Time - 1:09)



## Transcript:

### Welcome and Introduction

#### Vanessa Timmer:

*Slide 1: Introduction (00:01)*

Welcome to the webinar launching the Local Governments and the Sharing Economy report. I am Vanessa Timmer, a lead author of the report and the Executive Director of One Earth – a Vancouver Canada based nonprofit “think and do” tank focused on advancing sustainable consumption and production.

Welcome everyone and thank you for participating. I'm joined by Rosie – would you like to introduce yourself?

**Rosemary Cooper:**

Hello, I'm Rosemary Cooper, a Senior Associate at One Earth and the other lead author of the Roadmap together with Vanessa Timmer.

**Vanessa Timmer:**

Today, Rosie and I are presenting the highlights of the roadmap. We'll also hear a few words from some of our local government partners in terms of how these ideas are landing on the ground in cities.

After our presentations, we'll take your questions, which we welcome you to type into the webex chatbox at any point during this webinar. We'll collect these and see how many we can discuss. Please mute your computer microphone by clicking on the mute button on webex – on the phone lines the mute is \*6.

You can also use our hashtag (#localgovsharingecon) for comments and questions about the report.

The webinar is being recorded and is an hour long – we've added an additional 15 min to answer questions for those of you who can stay.

*Slide 2: Acknowledgements (1:51)*

Thank you to The J.W. McConnell Family Foundation for supporting this roadmap and project as part of Cities for People – which is an initiative focused on urban resilience and livability.

In addition to Rosie and I, we have two contributing authors on the webinar line today – Cora Hallsworth and Dwayne Appleby as well as others who provided research and project support such as Dagmar Timmer.

This project was also a collaborative process – we developed the roadmap in conversation with experts and practitioners.

We particularly want to thank our Advisory Committee composed of City Directors and staff from 3 US and 3 Canadian cities who are also members of the Urban Sustainability Directors Network – a number of whom have joined us today.

- Arianne Sperry, City of Portland
- Alicia Polacok, City of Portland
- Leslie Ng, City of Vancouver
- Mark Bekkering, City of Toronto
- Julie Saporito, City & County of Denver
- McKenzie Jones, City of Flagstaff
- Danielle Lussier, City of Montréal
- Allison Ashcroft, City of Victoria

We are also grateful for the insights from our Project Advisors:

- April Rinne, Sharing Economy Advisor, Consultant and Speaker
- Neal Gorenflo, Co-Founder, Shareable

- Wendy Philleo, Executive Director, Center for a New American Dream
- Babe O’Sullivan, Sustainability Liaison, City of Eugene
- Juliet Schor, Professor, Sociology, Boston College

*Slide 3: About the Project (03:44)*

At One Earth, we developed the Local Government and Sharing Economy project to respond to a need. Local governments are faced with a tsunami of Sharing Economy activities and many are overwhelmed with little time or opportunity to develop an effective response.

Concerns range from business competitiveness to jobs, health, safety and other risks and environmental impacts. Rather than adopt a piecemeal, reactive approach, or regulate just for safety and insurance – how can we advance other city priorities many of which are connected to sustainability -- such as greater equity, reducing the number of cars on the road, housing affordability?

We ask:

**How can cities strategically engage with the Sharing Economy to advance sustainability?**

Sharing has always been a part of city life – we can think of libraries and public spaces – but in the past few years, we’ve seen an acceleration in sharing innovations from people and organizations borrowing and sharing goods such as tools and equipment, renting out spare rooms, and sharing cars and bikes. Technological, economic and social factors all drive the rapid growth of the Sharing Economy. Digital technologies and web platforms increase the ease and convenience of transactions while reducing costs and help connect distributed networks of people and assets.

And it is big business, with Price Waterhouse Coopers estimating \$335 billion in revenue in Sharing Economy sectors. There is also rapid growth in the non-monetized parts such as Coachsurfing and a lot of the neighbourhood sharing as well.

We were curious as to whether car sharing and ridesourcing, co-working spaces, clothing swaps and other activities for example, reduce our ecological footprints and increase social connection and resilience. How can we use the Sharing Economy to build better cities?

**Example of city responses #1: Airbnb and Shared Spaces**

*Slide 4: Shared Spaces (06:29)*

Let’s get straight into an example from the Shared Spaces analysis of our report, which was led and written by contributing author Larissa Ardis with Rosemary Cooper.

Many of you are familiar with Airbnb, which is a global peer-to-peer accommodation marketplace where you can place your own spare rooms or properties to rent out as accommodation instead of staying at a hotel. Founded by two entrepreneurs in the Bay Area (Brian Chesky and Joe Gebbia) in 2008, there are now more rooms and properties listed than in the Hilton Hotel Chain – in fact there are 1,500,000 listings in 34,000 cities in 190 countries.

This has disrupted the hotel industry and is a real challenge for policymakers. While consumers and homeowners who are renting their places are often happy with the extra income and opportunity to

meet visitors, these informal rentals do not comply with the same zoning, safety and accessibility laws, and generally are not subject to hotel taxes.

We document two city cases which cities are leading the way in responding to these challenges.

In 2014, Portland Oregon defined short term rentals (STRs) as a new category of housing in its planning code. STR operators are obligated by local law to:

- register in the City's Transient Lodging Tax program
- collect and remit 11.5% (state and local) taxes from clients
- complete safety inspections
- notify neighbours
- purchase permits biennially
- limit STRs to 90 nights per year

The City also negotiated a private, separate agreement with Airbnb to collect and remit city and state taxes on behalf of STR operators, and to remind operators of their obligations to comply with local regulations before posting an advertisement.

Airbnb has since remitted millions in taxes to the City in lump sums, but its agreement with the City offers no effective way yet to identify operators who otherwise violate local laws.

#### Austin, Texas

In 2012, the City of Austin, Texas began requiring all STR operators to purchase licenses (\$285), which must be renewed annually, and the city also collects and remits a 9% hotel occupancy tax from clients. Austin is refining its enforcement process but there has already been a high rate of compliance.

#### *Slide 5: Recommendations for Shared Spaces (10:15)*

Some of our recommendations:

- **Use clear terminology** – we want to move away from terms like home sharing, host and guest to short-term rental and operator and client to reflect the fact that most transactions involve money and many operators have little or no contact with clients.
- **Thoughtfully regulate short-term rentals**, especially in communities with low vacancy rates, in order to safeguard equity and housing affordability, and to mitigate possible impacts on neighbours, community character, and city resources.

What to watch for:

Airbnb has put forward a number of claims of environmental benefits including reduced greenhouse gas emissions compared with hotel stays - for example, in their 2014 environmental impact study by the Cleantech Group.

However, we have found no evidence that people who use STRs fly or drive less than other people. STRs may well be helping to increase tourism— and with it, our travel-related impacts on the environment— by lowering the cost of the accommodation component of travel.

We focus here on short-term rentals. In the Shared Spaces Chapter of the report, we also look at cooperative housing, co-living, work spaces, storage and parking.

While Airbnb is an important player, we emphasize in our report that it's easy to get overly focused on the larger players. Sharing Economy activities are happening at all scales and sizes and we found Community Sharing to be important.

Rosie, can you share another concrete example from the roadmap?

### **Example of city responses #2: Tool Libraries, Fix-It Clinics and Community Sharing**

*Slide 6: Community Sharing - Tool Libraries (12:25)*

#### **Rosemary Cooper:**

There are currently over 50 tool libraries in the US and at least a dozen in Canada! Tool libraries accept tool donations from the community and then rent them out or, in some cases, lend them for free.

Tool libraries offer a range of home repair and power tools, as well as tools for gardening, sewing, cooking and preserving, and bicycle maintenance. Some offer classes and even community work spaces; some are linking up with coworking spaces and maker spaces. In short, tool libraries are becoming community hubs as people also share space, skills and experience.

#### **Toronto Tool Library and Toronto Public Library Partnership**

As a result of a new partnership, the Toronto Tool Library opened its third branch at the Downsview Public Library to provide hand, power and gardening tools. The Toronto Public Library views the tool library as a way to embrace innovation and technology; it reinforces their role as a community hub and boost membership – particularly for those in their 20s and early 30s.

This initiative was done as a one-year pilot so it was low cost and low risk. The Toronto Public Library receives some rent money and uses otherwise idle space. For the library, the pilot offers an opportunity to test expansion into a suburban location where folks are less familiar with tool libraries. If the pilot is successful, we could see expansion to other branches with tremendous scalability potential given their 18 million annual visitors.

Sustainability impacts:

Many tool libraries have limited time and resources to measure impacts so, yes, there is a data gap.

The USDN and the Cascadia Consulting Group measured tool library impacts in its 2015 report entitled: "Sustainable Consumption and Cities" – featuring a survey of the Portland Tool Library. They discovered a range of positive economic, environmental and social impacts:

- **Economic** - cost savings for members; providing access versus ownership; saving money through do-it-yourself (DIY) projects; gaining new professional skills.
- **Environmental** - sharing tools reduces need for production of new ones; some members use tools for green projects; some tool libraries focus explicitly on renting tools for home energy audits.
- **Social** – tool libraries act as cornerstone of the community; enabling interaction with other members; improving the neighborhood, e.g. community garden; and supporting projects for friends or neighbours.

We'd encourage more research like this but it's important to avoid getting too fixated on understanding the impacts on city priorities upfront; instead tie them into pilot project efforts and/or engage innovators to help measure impacts, for example, possibly help tool libraries add a question or two in their annual surveys.

### **Fix-It Clinics / Repair Cafes**

*Slide 7: Community Sharing - Fix-It Clinics (16:29)*

Some tool libraries also host Fix-it clinics (aka repair cafes) where volunteers help repair items like clothes, jewelry, small engines, and bicycles, household goods and, in some cases, computers and other electronic goods. Local governments play a variety of roles: the City of Portland's approach is to partner and promote; the City of Flagstaff incubates fix-it clinics and coordinates them with a partner.

### **Hennepin County Fix-It Clinic Case Study**

Recognizing the value of goods repair to their waste management goals, the local government of Hennepin County, Minnesota, takes a different approach -- they coordinate Fix-It Clinic and they find them to provide excellent return on investment of time and resources. While volunteers are the heart of the program, the County pays 25% of one city staff person's time to coordinate the clinics and provides some snacks and refreshments. As a result, Hennepin has a consistent set of workshops so residents can wait for one that is closest to home or fits their schedule.

The County measures the impact in a simple, yet effective way. All goods coming into the Clinics are weighed and then participants fill out a 10-question survey at the end to track their satisfaction and what was fixed entirely or in part. The result: since 2012 around 14,000 tons of waste diverted from the landfill and lots of really happy, engaged people who have saved some money and maybe learned basic repair skills.

The main point is that community sharing is an overlooked aspect of the Sharing Economy where local governments can play relatively simple roles to achieve a range of sustainability benefits. Other cities including Eugene, Flagstaff, and Vancouver enable Community Sharing in various ways. Anna Awimbo from the Center for a New American Dream was a project advisor for this Roadmap. New Dream developed the very helpful "Guide to Sharing" and hosts CommunityShare workshops that, amongst other benefits, help local governments connect with community sharing innovators, inventory their assets and establish a related web resource.

### **Report Key Messages (including Addressing Data Gaps)**

*Slide 8: 3 Key Messages (19:22)*

There are 3 key messages in the roadmap:

1. The Sharing Economy is not inherently sustainable but cities can help to make it more so.
2. Community sharing is a promising area where local governments can play proactive, enabling roles.
3. Addressing data gaps is critical for understanding sustainability impacts on cities.

**(1) The Sharing Economy is not inherently sustainable but local governments can help to make it more so.**

A 2014 report by IDDRI (Institut du développement durable et des relations internationales) came to this same conclusion - sustainable outcomes depend on what is being shared and the conditions around sharing.

We came to this conclusion, but for a broader definition of sustainability - one that also includes resilience, equity, local prosperity and quality of life because sustainability is most robust when multiple dimensions are considered and advanced together.

Cities have an important role to play in helping to make the Sharing Economy more sustainable and achieving related city priorities.

*Slide 9: Quote from Juliet Schor (20:25)*

Juliet Schor, an advisor to this Roadmap and Professor of Sociology at Boston College concluded after studying the Sharing Economy for three years:

“Outside the US, the impetus to share in transportation, housing, foods, and goods is more integrally tied to city-level goals of carbon emission reduction, informational transparency and genuine democracy. By embedding sharing practices within those larger municipal level movements, the likelihood that the sharing movement can achieve its stated goals is greater.”

*Slides 10 and 11: City Cases and Snapshots (21:12)*

An initial scan of local government activity across North America early in this project revealed that a number of municipalities are mirroring their international counterparts and are using the Sharing Economy to advance various sustainable city priorities. Their efforts are featured in this roadmap and we draw upon their experiences to generate lessons and recommendations for others.

Yet there is also tremendous untapped potential. A lack of clarity about which Sharing activities genuinely advance sustainability goals which confuses and inhibits the most effective actions. The pace of growth of the Sharing Economy favours predominantly piecemeal and reactive responses by local government. Many Sharing activities and local government roles that could advance sustainability are overlooked.

This Roadmap is designed to advise local governments about ways to consciously tap into the Sharing Economy to not only realize its initial promise, but to do so in a manner that advances local sustainability goals.

**(2) Community Sharing is an often-overlooked part of the Sharing Economy with tremendous sustainability potential where local government can play simple, effective roles.**

*Slide 12: Community Sharing (22:23)*

What is Community Sharing?

It includes a diverse set of individuals and organizations focused at more local scales that currently use digital technology more modestly and instead emphasize in-person connection. Non-monetized transactions are more dominant. Many Community Sharing innovators embrace sharing in the more traditional sense of the word and explicitly pursue goals and practices to reduce waste or consumption, build community and social connection, promote equity and more affordable living.

Examples include:

- Community swap meets of clothing, toys, crops, seeds, clothing, baby food, media and more
- Local lending libraries for tools, clothing, toys, seeds
- Timebanking - a reciprocity-based work trading system in which hours are the currency
- Repair Cafes/Fix-It Workshops where people bring broken appliances, clothes, computers and more to be repaired by volunteer 'fixers'
- Food-related sharing such as food-buying clubs, kitchen shares and community gardens.

*Slide 13: Community Sharing Recommendations (23:45)*

Key Community Sharing recommendations:

- Prioritize support for Community Sharing innovators who promote reuse, borrowing and swapping, repair, buying less and smarter.
- Enable Community Sharing by supporting a sharing inventory, web page, promoting events and ideas, acting as a facilitator and connector.
- Consider incubating and/or coordinating Fix-It Clinics.
- To scale Community Sharing, shift to community- based behaviour change, support expansion into new neighborhoods, help innovators get better organized, and provide underutilized public spaces and municipal infrastructure.
- Consider adopting a more systematic, on-line approach to sharing spaces for Community Sharing innovators modelled on the UK Space for Growth programme.

**(3) There is a major gap in understanding by local governments about how the Sharing Economy impacts city priorities, which inhibits interest and innovation by cities and somewhat constrains independent research.**

*Slide 14: Addressing Data Gaps (25:14)*

Some of the challenges:

- Sharing Economy businesses are generally reluctant to share data citing concerns over privacy and competition, although there are some exceptions. Some - particularly start-ups – are offering limited time or resources to engage in data sharing.
- The rapid evolution of the Sharing Economy has meant limited time to prioritize research efforts or commit funds by cities.
- Data sharing is discussed predominantly in the midst of regulatory efforts, which are often time-consuming and expensive.



- Data scraping is a means of last resort to find the information that cities need to make informed policy decisions.

*Slide 15: Recommendations to Address Data Gaps (26:45)*

Key recommendations to address data gaps:

- Cities and their organizations such as the Urban Sustainability Directors Network (USDN) or Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) should prioritize Sharing Economy research and forge partnerships to fund this research.
  - Step 1: convene to prioritize research needs.
  - Step 2: form partnerships with universities, foundations, research organizations to fund and conduct research.
  - The 2015 report on measuring sustainable consumption supported by cities through the USDN Innovation Grant is an example of this two-step approach.
- Require data sharing when negotiating regulatory agreements. For example, Seattle with Car2Go and Portland who required data sharing with Uber as part of 120-day trial period (both cases are featured in the Roadmap). This is less costly and time consuming than other options e.g. data scraping, protracted regulatory battles.
- Explore giving preferential access to city markets for Sharing Economy businesses that share relevant data e.g. Ridescout - free mobile app to find quickest and cheapest way to travel using real-time data on mobility options. Stated intention to share real-time data about how people are travelling.
- Cultivate collaboration with public and private sector leaders to discuss Sharing Economy topics, including data sharing.

**Sharing Economy Definition**

*Slide 16: Diversity of Sharing Activities (28:46)*

“Coming up with a solid definition of the Sharing Economy that reflects common usage is nearly impossible. There is great diversity among activities as well as baffling boundaries drawn by participants.” (Juliet Schorr)

We wanted to create a definition specifically tailored to local governments. So we analyzed existing definitions, and consulted with our local government advisors.

Our Google trends analysis shared that - regardless of the nuances of definition - the term Sharing Economy is by far the most common term used to define this field. So we adopted that term Sharing Economy, recognizing that other terms may resonate better with different places and organizations.

*Slides 17 and 18: Range of Sharing Economy Beliefs (29:49)*

When we analyzed the range of Sharing Economy definitions, we found that differences among these definitions stem from the variations in values and beliefs about the Sharing Economy. And that definitions tend to focus also on what the Sharing Economy *should* operate versus how it actually operates.

We wanted to create a definition based primarily on how the Sharing Economy actually operates and provide useful categories for local government.

*Slide 19: Defining the Sharing Economy (30:24)*

Roadmap Sharing Economy Definition:

A spectrum of actors (non-profit to social enterprise to for-profit) that identify with Sharing Economy beliefs and traits and buy, sell, rent, loan, borrow, trade, swap and barter a broad range of tangible and intangible assets including goods, time, and space. Information technologies and web platforms support necessary trust and reciprocity, and dramatically lower transaction costs.

*Slide 20: Five Sharing Economy Traits (31:06)*

The five Sharing Economy traits are:

- Utilizing information technologies to varying degrees, ranging from essential use by for-profit actors to more modest and incidental use by community sharing innovators;
- Making use of the idling capacity of assets and promoting access over ownership for many, but not all, Sharing Economy transactions;
- Connecting dispersed networks of people and/or assets through information technology and/or in-person meetings and events;
- Providing opportunity for trust building, reciprocity and social connectivity to varying degrees; community sharing innovators emphasize this component the most; and
- Embracing the commons to varying degrees ranging, for example, from jointly used proprietary software or goods to those that are “open source” and freely available to all.

*Slides 21 and 22: Five Categories of Sharing Economy Actors (32:06)*

There are five categories of actors. Many defensible definitions would stop at the three actor types where exchanges are digitally mediated, but we found two additional categories valuable and relevant to local government – Community Sharing and public sector organizations.

I’ve gone over Community Sharing already. Public sector organizations are the fifth category. They may seek to innovate by applying some of the insights and practices of the Sharing Economy, and can support or forge partnerships with any of the other actors to promote sharing in alignment with city priorities.

Examples include: public libraries offering space for tools, seeds, etc.; local governments that run bikesharing; municipal purchasing; community centres that host community kitchens and swap meets; the City of Montreal incubating a new snow removal app.

**Vanessa Timmer:**

Thank you Rosie and I’d like to remind participants on this webinar to pose any questions you might have in the webex chatbox.

## Local Government Roles

*Slide 23: Local Government Roles (33:45)*

Typically, we think of local government roles in terms of regulation. In this roadmap we explore a full spectrum of roles in the Sharing Economy.

*Slide 24: Local Government Roles - Low Effort, Medium Effort, High Effort (34:46)*

These range from community led activities that require **low effort** on local governments part – promoting, funding these community actors with small grants and partnering on initiatives.

To **medium efforts** in terms of educating city stakeholders about the Sharing Economy and advocating for action by higher levels of government.

To **high efforts** such as leading by example through Sharing Economy activities undertaken by the local government itself through to regulation and enforcement of Sharing Economy actors.

## Sustainability Filter

Local governments undertake these roles to serve the public interest. We are particularly interested in how these roles can be used to move ahead on sustainability...

*Slide 25: Sustainability Definition (35:48)*

...which can be defined as advancing quality of life for all equitably while living within our ecological means....

*Slide 26: Sustainability Filter - Dimensions (36:08)*

We explored sustainability across six integrated dimensions: living within ecological means, resilience, natural systems, equity, prosperous local economies, and quality of life.

*Slide 27: Sustainability Filter - Guiding Questions (36:23)*

The sustainability filter is defined further in Chapter 2 of the roadmap with guiding questions that cities can use to prioritize their engagement with the Sharing Economy and address the ecological, social and economic dimensions of sustainability:

- 1. Living within ecological means** – Does the Sharing Economy activity support absolute reductions in energy and materials flows to live within our ecological means?
- 2. Resilience** - Does the Sharing Economy activity enhance resilience and climate adaptation?
- 3. Natural systems** - Does the Sharing Economy activity protect and restore natural systems?
- 4. Equity** - Does the Sharing Economy activity advance equity and social inclusion and embrace diversity?
- 5. Prosperous local economies** - Does the Sharing Economy activity advance economic vitality and diversity, a level of self-reliance, and decent jobs?

## 6. Quality of life - Does the Sharing Economy enhance social connectivity and wellbeing for all?

We suggest metrics for measuring these dimensions based on the STAR Communities Rating System built by and for cities and local communities across North America as a certification program to recognize sustainable communities.

*Slide 28: Local Governments should care because... (37:21)*

Local governments should care about the Sharing Economy because it could...

- Reduce ecological footprints of city inhabitants and wasteful practices
- Save local government money
- Create jobs and entrepreneurial opportunities
- Advance social connectivity and 'social capital'
- Spur social innovation
- Lower the cost of education, collaboration, and research, and
- Reduce our need to acquire material things to earn status or social distinction

*Slide 29: Without thoughtful checks... (37:47)*

But without thoughtful checks, it could also....

- Appear to reduce overall consumption while simply shifting it from one sector or activity to another
- Increase ecological and carbon footprints by growing the volume of vehicle traffic, travel, and consumer demand
- Erode the tax base as more economic transactions take place outside of spheres subject to accountability
- Negatively impact people not directly involved in Sharing Economy exchanges
- Push local wages and benefits down
- Erode the supply of affordable rental housing
- Exacerbate inequality as status is redefined by access to resources rather than ownership

*Slide 30: City Cases and Snapshots (38:23)*

We draw on close to 100 city cases and examples from across Canada and the US and around the world, including 7 in-depth explorations.

*Slide 31: Circle Diagram (38:31)*

We use the sustainability filter to analyze shared mobility, spaces, and goods and community sharing, and to take a lighter look at shared food and energy. As Rosie mentioned, we also explore addressing data gaps. The summary and full report highlight our recommendations and what to watch out for.

## **Shared Goods: Applying the Sustainability Filter Example #1**

*Slide 32: Shared Goods (38:56)*

For example, Shared Goods – this is the sharing of items such as equipment, machinery, tools, toys, clothing, furniture, appliances, books and electronics among different actors often using online platforms – including sharing among businesses.

*Slide 33: Shared Goods Recommendations (39:10)*

This is one of our recommendations:

Support Business-to-Business exchange through initiating and / or supporting online platforms and Industrial Symbiosis pilot projects, including those where local government provides space or acts as an anchor partner, e.g., Partners in Project Green (Ontario)

What to watch for:

Triggering rebound effects – savings from sharing goods are used to buy other goods.

## **Shared Energy: Applying the Sustainability Filter Example #2**

*Slide 34: Shared Energy (40:41)*

Let's take another example from research led by Cora Hallsworth on Shared Energy. This includes an exploration of "Bottom-up, democratized start-ups for energy creation, storage, and sharing" including distributed generation of energy.

*Slide 35: Shared Energy Recommendations (41:05)*

Recommendation:

Stimulate the renewable energy market through local government purchasing power or by buying shares in local energy cooperatives.

What to watch for:

Missing this opportunity to help cities transition to renewable energy and achieve carbon reduction targets.

These were a couple of brief looks into Shared Goods and Shared Energy. Now, let's take a more detailed exploration of Shared Mobility – which was analyzed and led by Rosemary Cooper for this project.

## **Shared Mobility: Applying the Sustainability Filter Example #3**

*Slide 36: Shared Mobility (41:43)*

**Rosemary Cooper:**

Shared mobility is arguably the most rapidly growing and evolving sector of the Sharing Economy. It includes a variety of short-term, as-needed shared mobility modes: public transit, bikesharing, carsharing, ridesharing, ridesourcing, micro-transit and commercial delivery services.

*Slide 37: Shared Mobility #2 (42:23)*

I'm going to focus first on ridesourcing because its rapid growth has caused many cities across North America significant concern over safety and insurance, fair business practice, impact on the taxi industry, and - to some degree - environmental impact.

*Slide 38: Ridesourcing - Definitions (42:52)*

Ridesourcing definition:

- On-demand services where users "source" a ride through a mobile app from a pool of private passenger vehicles driven (usually) by non-professional drivers. Uber and Lyft are the two dominant companies.
- Ridesourcing drivers are usually NOT travelling to the same destination as their passengers, and their motivation is to earn money.

This makes ridesourcing more similar to a fee-for-service taxi service than ridesharing - carpooling and vanpooling options - that have been around for decades, where the driver and passenger share a common destination and it is a non-profit arrangement.

*Slide 39: Ridesourcing's Contribution to "Living within Ecological Means" (43:42)*

The challenge in assessing sustainability impact as with other areas of the Sharing Economy is that there is a major data gap. There has only been one independent study carried out at the time of writing by the University of California Transportation Center who did an intercept study in downtown San Francisco.

*Slide 40: Other Sustainability Impacts of Ridesourcing (45:21)*

Ridesourcing conclusion based on the available evidence:

While ridesourcing may provide a new mobility option with shorter wait times and possibly lower costs relative to taxis, it may weaken the capacity of cities to live within ecological impacts, particularly in downtown locations.

- replaces some transit, walking & cycling trips
- unknown impact on VKT or VMT (vehicles kilometres /miles driven)
- may induce new car trips (the rebound effect)
- modest changes in car ownership

What to watch out for:

- Getting distracted - for example, the debate about whether ridesourcing and taxis are more efficient is less important than shifting people into more sustainable modes.

Other sustainability impacts of ridesourcing:

- health impacts are uncertain - may be detrimental;
- there are concerns about access for the disabled;
- access by low-income person are likely below that of the general population;
- concerns about whether ridesourcing provides decent quality jobs: drivers are contract workers without job security or benefits whose net hourly wage including ALL costs is \$12.33. This is

above current minimum wages but below increases underway and below living wage for households with children.

*Slide 41: Ridesourcing Recommendations (46:31)*

In the Fall of 2016, look for the results of the first major independent study of the environmental impacts of ride-hailing conducted by the Natural Resources Defense Council and the University of California–Berkeley. Uber and Lyft will provide some data but will have no control over the results.

Can ridesourcing make a positive contribution to cities sustainability goals?

Ridesourcing recommendations:

- Facilitate the expansion of ridesourcing and carsharing into suburban municipalities where development patterns preclude efficient, cost-effective transit in order to fill transit gaps and foster first/last mile integration. E.g. DART - Dallas Area Rapid Transit linked Uber to its Dart GoPass mobile ticketing app.
- Explore the use of ride-splitting (e.g., UberPool and LyftLine) to scale carpooling, particularly for community to work. Ride-splitting matches customers in real-time so they can share a ride and split the cost. Uber and Lyft's marketing savvy and large pool of drivers and users may give them the potential to scale carpooling which peaked in 1980.
- Address multiple barriers to the participation of low-income people and vulnerable populations in shared mobility and explore partnerships between public, non-profit and private actors.
- There are multiple barriers to low-income people in shared mobility, e.g. need for a credit card; costs; lack of service in low-income neighborhoods; lack of smart phone or internet access; simply not knowing the service exists.

Nice Ride Minnesota Case Study

*Slide 42: Bikesharing in Minnesota (48:00)*

Bikesharing is an area where solutions are emerging to address this equity gap. Nice Ride expanded access into a diverse, low-income neighbourhood. They found that installing bike kiosks was not enough.

Community focus groups also showed the need to: lower annual subscriptions costs; provide memberships at convenient locations, not just online; provide targeted outreach with free trials; and integrate membership with public transit.

The NiceRide Neighbourhood Program provided bikes to 140 folks for three months in return for tasks at local bike shop and participating in NiceRide gatherings. The keys to their success include:

- They made bikes highly visible and extremely accessible to those who normally don't bike.
- They addressed cost barriers by making them free.
- They shifted perceptions about who bikes.

In the second year, the program doubled in size and is expanding its geographic scope in order to continue enhancing cycling culture with low-income populations.

Integrated Mobility recommendation:

Cultivate a shift toward integrated mobility planning that considers a suite of mobility options, with public transportation as its foundation, together with land use planning in order to foster car-reduced (and car-free) lifestyles.

### Montréal Transport Cocktail Example

*Slide 43: Montreal's Transport Cocktail (50:03)*

The Société Transport de Montreal (STM) is responsible for the region's transit system and has developed agreements and partnerships with bikesharing, carsharing and taxi providers in order to create a cocktail of mode options that people can use during the same trip.

STM offers discounted, bundled services, e.g. lower rates for car and bikesharing. Payment for all modes is on the same system. STM has also made bike enhancements such as more buses with bike racks, bike parking at transit stations, and shared bus-bike lanes.

The taxi companies have been turned from a rival into a key partner that helps address transit and paratransit gaps. Taxibuses are shared taxis on a fixed-route or on-demand basis that provide first/last mile connections to commuter rail stations and other important entry points to the regional transportation system. The integration of taxis and taxibuses allows STM to expand transit coverage into low-density areas in a cost-effective manner so that the region is 99.5% covered. Taxis can use dedicated bus lanes which lowers their trip times. It's also cost-effective.

You can learn more about the rapidly emerging field of Integrated Mobility Planning in Chapter 3a of the Roadmap on Shared Mobility. Also the Shared Used Mobility Centre (SUMC) based out of Chicago provides a range of very useful information, tools and resources designed for local governments, including integrated mobility mapping and a database of policies, ordinances & regulations.

Easy steps for integrated mobility planning can involve convening public and private mobility providers to explore better connectivity, schedule coordination and joint signage.

#### **Vanessa Timmer:**

Thank you, Rosie. A reminder to add any questions to the chatbox and you can also tweet at #localgovsharingecon.

### Strategic Opportunities and Sharing Economy Resources

*Slide 44: Strategic Opportunities (52:25)*

In addition to the analysis of Sharing Economy sectors, we define strategic opportunities for local governments in prioritizing their efforts and using the Sharing Economy as a tool to most effectively advance urban sustainability.

Each city is going to take a different strategic approach given political and community priorities, organizational capacity, limited time and resources, and the nature of Sharing Economy activity and impacts. In Chapter 6, we highlight a number of strategies including:

- how local governments can focus and align their involvement,
- lead by example,



- play enabling roles matching the spectrum of Sharing Economy actors,
- advance equity, and
- pursue more systematic and integrated approaches over time specifically highlighting how the City of Vancouver and City of Seoul South Korea are doing this.

*Slide 45: Resources (53:25)*

Chapter 7 provides additional resources including the identification of key Sharing Economy readings and networks.

*Slide 46: Appendix: Sample Policies, Ordinances, Surveys... (53:40)*

And in the Appendix we provide links and examples of relevant local government materials such as sample ordinances, surveys and legislation.

*Slide 47: Title Page of Report (54:00)*

We developed the Local Governments and Sharing Economy project in a process of collaboration with partners including cities.

### **Local Government Representatives Share their Reflections on the Report and the Sharing Economy**

*Slide 48: Local Government Reflections (54:03)*

A number of our local government partners are on the call today who we've been in conversation with in developing this roadmap, I'd like to invite them now to say a few words about how our conversations about the Sharing Economy and sustainable consumption have influenced their perspective and actions.

1. **Babe O'Sullivan**, Sustainability Liaison, City of **Eugene, Oregon**
2. **Alicia Polacok**, Residential Outreach Coordinator, City of **Portland, Oregon**
3. **Allison Ashcroft**, Sr Planner, Sustainability, City of **Victoria, BC**
4. **Lisa Lin**, Sustainability Manager, City of **Houston, Texas**
5. **Jo Zientek**, Deputy Director, Integrated Waste Management, City of **San Jose, CA**

#### **Babe O'Sullivan, Sustainability Liaison, City of Eugene, Oregon:**

Thank you so much for giving me a moment to speak to your work and I wanted to thank both you and Rosemary and your team for this incredible report you've developed for us.

Most of what I wanted to speak to is the value that this work brings to the field of urban sustainability work and I know that several of my peers from the Urban Sustainability Directors Network are on the call and so they can affirm this as well.

I see this report really lying at the nexus of the work cities are doing on consumption and sustainability. That's an area I've been working in for a couple of years now and this roadmap helps to advance our thinking. You are familiar with some of the projects and reports that have been sponsored by the Urban Sustainability Directors Network but this is an important addition to that suite of resources because it does focus specifically on the Sharing Economy.

Some of the true value of this report comes from how it brings clarity to what has been a rather chaotic active area – one that I know myself and my peers in other cities have had a big challenge to try and navigate through. This really helps to bring a level of clarity and thinking to that work.

It is also going to help us prioritize action. The sustainability filter that you've embedded into the report again is another important asset for how we do this work going forward. It will help us sort through potentially conflicting information and objectives.

Many of us have been working under the assumption that the Sharing Economy is generally a sustainable activity. You've done a good job of myth busting around that and highlighting the kinds of unintended consequences that we should be aware of as Sustainability Directors.

It really brings some valuable thinking and tools that we can all be using as we continue this work together so my thanks again.

**Alicia Polacok, Residential Outreach Coordinator, City of Portland, Oregon:**

I just want to echo what Babe said. I appreciate all the work on this report. It allows us to step back and move forward with the sustainable consumption work. My role as facilitator and connector between the Bureau of Planning and Sustainability especially around Resourceful PDX and the Thoughtful Consumption campaign, I think this report allows us the ability to pursue some more pilot ideas and help advance the Bureau and Sustainability goals around thoughtful consumption.

A couple of things I wanted to tie in – the Community Sharing Chapter that Rosemary talked about was where I did some work and hopefully assisted and as I both re-read and reviewed it, I realized that there was a lot of potential for options. I want to encourage people who are on the call and people who read it that there are so many opportunities around partnerships and that piloting ideas however small they are is a really good first step.

One of the pilot projects that I'm currently am working on is mentioned in the report on page 172 around taking an existing program – it's actually a very long standing program called the Neighbourhood Cleaning Program or Community Collection Events – and tying in something new to that. And so this project is mentioned in the report and we partnered with Oregon State University and their Sustainability Office and the downtown neighbourhood association. We did a reuse and share event for people both students and downtown residents who live in multi-family properties.

We tried something different – just tried to engage people who are living in 4 or more units to do this reuse and share event. It was pretty successful – there were over 100 items that came to that event and  $\frac{3}{4}$  of those were maintained as reuse rather than recycling and everything else was recycled that was there. We felt that was just a good step.

There are other things – I want to try some other things. I learned a few things [from the report] and am going to try some things around the Vertical Living Libraries in the multi-family sector – I think there is something there. I know Toronto is doing a lot of work on that so I'd like to use that as a pilot option. I think talking to partners and potential partners about surveying members – there is something there and I like what Hennepin County is doing with their survey. Keeping that consistency is really key for all these options and there are things we can learn from each other. I'll leave it at that – I appreciate everybody's work and can answer questions as well.

**Allison Ashcroft, Senior Planner, Environmental Issues and Sustainability, City of Victoria, BC:**

Babe did a great job of talking about the work they've been doing and obviously Eugene has been a great leader in advancing a lot of this sustainable consumption research for sure. We're not nearly as advanced at the City of Victoria in our dialogue in City Hall around sustainable consumption again like Eugene or Vancouver or Portland.

But in an ad hoc fashion we have been implementing many of these or at least supporting partners in our communities to do this work. Our recreation centres and community centres and the properties they are located on have already become anchors for that community sharing with community kitchens and gardens and various classes being offered through them. And, like I said, these are primarily being driven by our very active and environmentally and socially conscious community with the city merely acting as a passive partner at this point. But there is a lot of opportunity for the city to take a more active role in promotion and partnership around the local community sharing aspect.

This roadmap is very timely because it will help to justify some of these actions that we are going to be recommending in our Climate Action Plan we're bringing before Council in January and specifically those actions that fall outside our production based inventories because they are either outside the traditional supply chain or they occur further upstream in the supply chain as is the case with the Sharing Economy and sustainable consumption initiatives.

We haven't developed consumption based inventory like Portland for instance. We do anticipate ours isn't all that different from theirs and it shows us that we can't limit ourselves to the actions that directly reduce emissions within the boundaries of our production based inventories if we want to achieve the ambitious greenhouse gas emission reductions necessary. And doing so would also miss the opportunity to advance many of the social justice issues in our city which are of the highest urgency and priority right now such as affordability, economic prosperity, community empowerment, stewardship, and social inclusion and equity.

Those really are our Council's strategic priorities and I think this roadmap / report will really help to take us from ideas to actions because it will help to provide justification and give confidence to our Council to be bold on those steps.

Again thanks – I want to echo Babe and note that a smaller city like Victoria would not necessarily be able to generate the research that this report and roadmap are providing. I'm really grateful for the work you have done.

**Lisa Lin, Sustainability Manager, City of Houston, Texas:**

I want to echo everyone that has spoken before me and thank you Vanessa and Rosemary on all of your work.

For us as a large city, we do face unique challenges in trying to talk about this kind of work to mitigate climate emissions and other issues. There are some issues with first communicating this with our city officials and other departments and figuring out what the role for us would be. I really like the way that you lay out the community involvement and city involvement as being low, medium and high levels of

effort. In the end, we'll probably take a kind of hybrid approach to what we do with the Sharing Economy and how to get involved.

There are some programs that we've started in the past and as you've said before these often have been a piecemeal approach which we are somewhat guilty of as we're trying to figure out how to enter this space and be effective in what we do.

What we've done in the past is focused on one sector like shared mobility that is one of the things we have been focusing on in the last couple of years seeing that transportation and traffic congestion are huge issues here. We've done a few pilots with bike share and car sharing and just trying to see where we need to be in further advancing that type of activity – how do we work with our transit authority and complementing what they are doing and seeing what the city can do to reduce single-occupancy vehicles on the roads.

At this point, we are still piecemeal approach but with a document like this it will definitely give us more direction as to how to address the work that the city is doing and figure out how we can take a more holistic approach to the Sharing Economy. Again thank you so much for this work and we look forward to using this document.

**Jo Zientek, Deputy Director, Integrated Waste Management, City of San Jose, CA:**

This is by far my favourite work that I've done this past year – Babe and you all and the work on sustainable consumption.

I really wanted to echo what Lisa said that we are using this work to help frame the messaging on what we're doing. Currently we're doing this a little stealthily by calling it sustainable consumption and Sharing Economy but we'd like to frame it more as a targeted effort.

To that end, we're working on a staff report on recycling rate. I'm very happy that we're calling out front and centre - the most important thing in that report is that the pounds of stuff that people are setting out on the curb has gone down. That is by far the most important thing in the report and that we can do – this is for both garbage and recycling.

We're doing a big effort – a first – a food rescue summit – an initiative at the Mayor's Office with some local nonprofits to be able to rescue food from restaurants and hotels using a tech platform. We're going to be doing a partnership with San José State University and our County that is focusing on how we can get that food out of the garbage stream back to people who need it quickly using existing resources and providing some tech leaders here in the Silicon Valley.

Finally, the other most interesting thing for me about this whole project is the social capital aspect of sharing. We have got some communities in some very low income neighbourhoods here that we've been working extensively on blight, litter and graffiti. We might be able to use them to leverage some of the concepts in this report.

**Vanessa Timmer:**

Thank you so much, Jo. That's great to hear. As you say, there are ways in which this is about reducing footprints, but this is also about the equity piece which I think is a key part of what we've talked about in the Urban Sustainability Directors Network conversations as well. A big thank you.

As Rosemary and I were mentioning, this was a very collaborative process of putting this roadmap together. It really was about building a community of learning as well so we could share what's happening in different cities, celebrate what works and to develop further actions.

## Questions and Answers

*Slide 49: Questions and Discussion (1:09:20)*

We have a few minutes now for a number of questions that have been put forward in the chat box. We won't have time for all of them but we'll try to answer a few of them now.

One of the questions that came up was about the **cradle-to-cradle methodology**. Bill McIntosh was asking about cradle-to-cradle certification and whether it has a role here in the Sharing Economy. I would say that in terms of the sustainability filter, William McDonough and Michael Braungart have done a really great job of unpacking what sustainability means at a deep level. Their McDonough / Baumgard Design Chemistry set of principles that they use to unpack sustainability (<http://www.mbdc.com/>). I think that's one way that we can connect the cradle-to-cradle methodology with a sustainability analysis of the Sharing Economy.

We were also asked a question by Santiago Perez: Is there evidence about whether Airbnb and like services has **decreased the construction of new budget hotels**? In our research, we actually found that potentially the hotel use is changing but what we are also finding is that Airbnb is causing some people to purchase entirely new properties in order just to list them on Airbnb. In fact, Airbnb itself is now looking to purchase properties to rent out on Airbnb. So we're not finding that that a reduction in constructing new hotels or using new properties is happening. We are seeing rebound effects in terms of not using existing assets but new assets and many of you have also heard that some of the rental market is being affected by Airbnb properties.

I'll hand it over to Rosie to talk about Anita Bhappu's question about how should one connect with **local governments interested in promoting community sharing**, looking for early adopters around technology enabled platforms. Rosie, do you want to speak to that particular point?

### **Rosemary Cooper:**

Absolutely. I think that certainly you can look on page 164 of the roadmap and see that there are a group of cities who were members of the community sharing working group - Denver, Flagstaff, Portland, Vancouver - who were deeply engaged in the community sharing conversations and may be interested in connecting. I think another organization that you may really want to connect with is the Center for a New American Dream because they are focused on community sharing, certainly all across the US and I know they are tapped into places and cities that may have more of an interest in this.

I look at your question and it is about community *goods* sharing so I would also strategically think about those cities that, if the platform has a role in reducing consumption and waste, those cities for whom that is a goal. Because you're always trying to link in with what the priorities are for each city.

### **Vanessa Timmer:**

Thank you, Rosemary. I also think that just because neighbourhood sharing hasn't been technologically enabled in the past, Juliet Schor was mentioning that they do have potential to link up to existing

technology platforms in order for people to find each other and to create that ease and convenience and connectivity. But technology platforms will never replace the great face to face interaction that is happening in community sharing.

Another question we received is from Laura Tate about the **jobs and employment possibilities in the Sharing Economy**. We look in the report at decent jobs, so are the jobs in shared goods, shared mobility, shared spaces affecting the types of jobs that are available.

There are also – of course – new job possibilities so, for example, in the business-to-business industrial symbiosis or resource exchange systems, you can see new jobs emerging in, for example, repair industries or reconstruction industries. And also there are possibilities for additional jobs in Fix-it Clinics or Maker Labs. And we are seeing new jobs emerging in the Sharing Economy space.

We didn't focus on that in a lot of detail except that we did look at the decency of those jobs – the safety, the liability and the kind of pay that people are receiving and looked at the employment records in cases such as Uber or Airbnb.

### **Closing**

*Slide 50: Thank You (1:14)*

That's all the time we have for questions today. You can see at the bottom [of the slide] the address for our LocalGovSharingEcon.com website, which is where you can find these resources, the city cases, and we really welcome you to connect with us on a number of fronts.

Tell us what you think, what kind of examples you have in terms of the kind of things that you're experiencing in the Sharing Economy and send these to [share@oneearthweb.org](mailto:share@oneearthweb.org). We were sharing some examples and comments on our web chat today. You can let us know if you have a group or event that you'd like us to join to speak about this project. We're also ready to help cities who would like to use this roadmap as a guide for their own strategies and actions.

And of course, with One Earth – as Babe was mentioning as well as Jo, Allison, Alicia and Lisa (from cities we were connecting with), we are continuing our look into the Sharing Economy as part of our collaboration with the Urban Sustainability Directors Network on cities and sustainable consumption. We're connecting together about how to take action on the ground in a way that advances sustainability.

I think one of the most promising aspects of the Sharing Economy is the way it encourages us to explore and make use of underutilized assets and services and really think that – when engaged with strategically, the Sharing Economy can be harnessed to serve local government priorities by helping create better cities and advance sustainability.

We are really grateful to The J.W. McConnell Family Foundation for supporting this work: for the process of collaboration, of moving this forward. We'd encourage you to be in touch and look forward to advancing the Sharing Economy in a way that really supports sustainability - and enabling the local government range of roles that make that possible.

Thank you so much for being part of this webinar today and we look forward to hearing from you.