

## **Working Definitions of Sustainable Urban Communities and the Living Lab**

### **Sustainable Urban Communities**

Scholarship in teaching and research related to urban sustainability requires an integrated and long-term approach that addresses the environmental, economic and social issues that exist in urban or urbanizing communities.

Knowledge development related to urban sustainability requires an overarching systems approach that encompasses all of the inter-dependent elements that contribute to urban sustainability (i.e., energy, water, transportation, food, equitable access to resources, etc.).

Ultimately pursuit of urban sustainability seeks to minimize the impact of our ecological footprint, move toward a financially viable economy that restores degraded environments, and foster a resilient community.

### **The Living Lab**

The 'Living Lab' concept refers to a problem-based teaching, research, and innovation strategy in which ongoing assessment and evaluation contribute to the knowledge base regarding the sustainability of our campus, community, and region.

PSU's approach to the Living Lab focuses on developing a research and teaching framework that engages with our community to address pressing regional sustainability challenges. This Living Lab framework recognizes that the Portland metropolitan region's physical and social conditions offer rich opportunities to foster:

- ~ Improved technological and social innovations for sustainable living;
- ~ Research that contributes to global discourses on urban sustainability;
- ~ Service-learning opportunities for undergraduate and graduate students;
- ~ A problem-based approach to learning;
- ~ Models for public policies and governance structures; and
- ~ Community-wide partnerships that improve social, economic and ecological conditions for the region.