

## Appendix 4

### *What is Urban Sustainability?*

*It's a term you're likely to hear more about in the future and while complex in its full rendering below is a snapshot of its meaning.*

## 1.2 What Do We Mean by Urban Sustainability?

***Sustainability means meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.***

The most commonly accepted definition of sustainability comes from a UN World Commission on Environment and Development (the Bruntland Commission) report published in 1987: **sustainability means meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.**<sup>3</sup>

Sustainable communities are characterized by the following practices and goals:

- ◆ **They place a high value on quality of life**—socially, economically, psychologically and spiritually—for their residents.
- ◆ **They respect the natural environment**, and the sensitive interface with the built environment.
- ◆ **They use appropriate technology** within an understanding of how existing and new technology can serve and improve communities
- ◆ **They optimize key resources**—human, natural and economic—by reducing waste and reusing resources.
- ◆ **They maintain scale and capacity** with respect to the natural and human environment to ensure that the environment is not overdeveloped, overbuilt, overused, or overpopulated.
- ◆ **They adopt a systems approach** to community development actions—recognizing the holistic nature of both the natural and the built environments.
- ◆ **They support life cycles** of natural and human processes, in view of the role that the built environment can play in supporting the viability, continuity, and renewability of these cycles.
- ◆ **They are responsive and proactive** in regard to changing community needs.
- ◆ **They value diversity** in the population and the natural environment.
- ◆ **They preserve heritage** in their cultural traditions, historical relationships and their expression in the built environment.<sup>4</sup>



**Notes/Documents/Research/Papers/Resources in support of the Environmental Imperative (add-on materials for collection by instructors and provided by OESi)**