

Revitalization Institute's Definitions

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Integrated Restoration Project:

Projects that integrate the restoration of at least 2 of the 12 restorative sectors. See the Asset Integration Guide for more details.

- An example would be brownfields and heritage, such as when an historic industrial building sits on contaminated property. One way to differentiate integrated restoration from integrated revitalization is that the former tends to be project (or redeveloper)-driven, whereas the latter tends to be program (or community)-driven. Integrated restoration projects can be rated according to our Asset Integration Guide, which measures the degree of integration the project has designed and achieved among the 12 sectors of restorable assets.
[see Lesson #03].

Integrated Revitalization Program:

An ongoing initiative to renew the natural, built, and socioeconomic environments of a community, county, region, nation, etc. Integrated revitalization greatly improves the efficiency of a community's or region's redevelopment investments, achieving far more socioeconomic renewal per dollar/Euro/etc. It's also the most effective way to attract new funding, both public and private. [See Stakeholder Integration Guide Lesson #05].

Theory of Integrated Revitalization (also called "Storm's Law", after Storm Cunningham, its originator):

"Increasing the level of integration among the 12 sectors of restorative projects (ecosystem, watershed, fishery, agriculture, brownfield, infrastructure, heritage, and catastrophe) and among the 4 stakeholder groups (business, government, non-profit, and academic) increases the level of socio-economic and environmental renewal achieved, with no little or no additional investment."

Restorative development:

Socioeconomic revitalization based on restoring natural, built, and social assets.

Restorable assets: Many of those things we knew as "problems" in the 20th Century (the waning days of the "sprawl economy") are now the "restorable assets" of this Century of Revitalization. We've polluted, extracted, and sprawled ourselves into a corner, and the new growth frontier is "behind us": We must renew what we've already built and repair the damage we've done to our natural resources if we wish to continue to grow economically.

- Examples of restorable assets include derelict historic buildings, contaminated properties, denuded watersheds, exhausted farmland, depleted fisheries, dying ecosystems, rundown schools, and dilapidated/ wasteful/ polluting/ obsolete/ poorly planned infrastructure of all types (water, sewer, transportation, power, solid waste, etc.).

Reblindness (also called "bimodalism"):

A disability of people, organizations, and communities that impairs their perception of restorative development and restorable assets. Usually caused by operating within the "pioneer" paradigm, which equates economic growth with the conquering of raw land and the extraction of virgin resources, and which only addresses the first two modes of the development lifecycle (new development and maintenance/conservation.) The cure for reblindness is to adopt a "trimodal" development perspective that includes the third mode--restorative development--which bases economic growth primarily on renewing the capacity of what we've already developed, and on restoring the damage we did to our natural resources along the way.)

Revitalization Institute

ACADEMIC NETWORK AND ADVOCATE FOR THE RESTORATION ECONOMY

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3 Signs of Reblindness:

- Not perceiving restorable assets, or perceiving them as problems.
- Not budgeting or planning RD except in emergencies or special initiatives (“Smart Growth”, “Main Street”, etc.)
- Not perceiving your local restoration economy, because it isn’t being measured or reported.

How to cure reblindness:

- Use the Trimodal development perspective to organize your policies, budgets, reports, etc.
- Use the 8-Sector Taxonomy to organize your inventory of restorable assets, your restoration projects, and your revitalization programs.

Silox:

A “virtual toxin” that afflicts communities and organizations with silo mentality. This causes them to focus their restorative efforts on individual structures, sites, or neighborhoods. This impairs their ability to harness the power of integrated revitalization: restoring natural, built, and social assets together, in a way that generates powerful efficiencies and synergies.

Signs of silox poisoning:

- Communities: You don’t get a sufficient “revitalization bang” for your “restoration bucks”.
- Companies and Non-profits: You offer many restorative products/services, but can’t effectively cross-sell them, and can’t offer revitalization services.

How to eliminate silox:

- Use Revitalization Institute’s Asset Integration Guide to design your restoration, remediation, and redevelopment projects.
- Use Revitalization Institute’s Stakeholder Integration Guide to design your community and regional revitalization initiatives.

Restoration Contagion:

A self-sustaining feedback loop of increasing private and public investment in revitalization. Used as the strategic element of Integrated Revitalization to minimize initial expenditure.

Brownfields, greyfields, whitefields, & greenfields:

- Brownfields: We all know that not all brownfields are equal: Some are severely contaminated, some moderately, some mildly, and some not at all (suspicion is enough to impair redevelopment).
- Greyfields: Abandoned or derelict former commercial sites, such as shopping centers, that are not significantly contaminated. Greyfields, unlike brownfields, are relatively uniform in condition, and are usually the most obvious and accessible redevelopment sites.
- Whitefields: Lands that are ecologically compromised but not significantly contaminated; usually former farms, clear-cut forestland, and areas heavily impacted by other human activities. In many development countries, this is probably the largest of the four categories. They’re called “whitefields” because they are like blank paper: They could be appropriate for development, or they could be appropriate for ecological purposes (after restoration).

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- Greenfields: Correctly defined (in our opinion), the term “greenfield” should be reserved for land that clearly should not be developed, usually because it’s either important wildlife habitat, or productive farmland. A second category could be defined as older regrowth areas that—while not pristine—have significant ecological value.
- In common parlance, many people use the term “greenfield” too broadly, including both pristine wildlife habitat and family farms along with degraded lands that are more properly referred to as “whitefields”. This makes it difficult for intelligent decisions to be made, resulting in true greenfields being developed when a whitefield would have sufficed. [Of course, greyfields and brownfields should usually be developed before whitefields.]

Revitalist:

We’d like to suggest a term for all the practitioners of restorative development—and other folks who are revitalizing the world through their work—so that we can refer to ourselves as a group: “revitalist”. We’re not going to push the term; we’re just putting it out there to see if it catches on. Here’s why:

- Literally millions of people around the planet remediate contaminated land, restore historic buildings, redevelop derelict properties and urban areas, revitalize agricultural lands and fisheries, reforest watersheds, restore ecosystems/rivers/streams, rebuild and replace decrepit infrastructure, and repair the damage of disasters and wars. All are restoring our world—our communities and our natural resources—but, until now, there hasn’t been a single word to describe and unify them. Make-do terms such as “restorationists”, “revitalizers”, “restorers”, “preservationists”, “redevelopers”, “remediationists”, etc. are either too limited or too clumsy to be universally adopted. If we can’t talk about ourselves as a group, as a profession, integration can never fully take place. We must take our attention off the nouns that separate us (the things we work on, such as brownfields, bridges, ecosystems, etc.) and focus on the verbs that unite us (restore, revitalize, etc.). Whether we restore historic landmarks, help depleted fisheries recover, or renovate antiquated sewer systems, we are all revitalizing the world.
- During the past 10-15 years of explosive growth in the global restoration economy, this lack of a unifying label for practitioners has helped undermine attempts at collaborative, multidisciplinary approaches (the best—maybe the only—way to accomplish integrated revitalization). An architect, civil engineer, developer, planner, etc. who specializes in revitalization has a VERY different skill set and philosophy from one who specializes in new (also called “destructive”, or “sprawl”) development. Being able to distinguish a revitalist designer/developer from a sprawl designer/developer is essential to the public agencies and private land owners looking to hire someone to restore the value or productivity of their property.
- Revitalists can be engineers (civil, structural, mechanical, software, etc.), architects (building & landscape), planners, economists, lawyers, city managers, mayors, governors, ecologists, chemists, biologists, farmers, foresters, investors, donors, entrepreneurs, and advocates. What they all have in common—whether restoring wetlands, farms, fisheries, historic districts, sewer systems, or contaminated lands—is their contribution to revitalization. It might be the renewal of an urban core, a rural area, a coastal economy, a watershed, or a nation. Thus, those who contribute to the restoration of our communities and natural resources are “revitalists”.

Note: If you’ve read *The Restoration Economy* (Berrett-Koehler, November 2002), you’ll be familiar with most of the above terms, and you’ll know that there is a surprising amount of restoration going on (well over a trillion dollars annually, worldwide). You’ll also know that there is also a shocking shortage of quality standards, as well as a dearth of effective, integrated planning as regards restorative development. This was the first book to document and define the economic sector known as restorative development, and to identify the megatrend that will most dramatically affect business and community development in the coming decades.

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