



Department of Sustainability Proposed 5 year Strategic Plan

Dear Council President Brady, Sustainability Chair Simon and members of Council,

In April, 2016, County Council passed Ordinance # 2016-0008 requiring the creation of a 5-year Sustainability Strategic Plan. We in the Department of Sustainability and the Administration wholeheartedly supported this idea. especially as the Department was a relatively new entity in County government, had a fairly large and broad mandate, but with a small, yet passionate staff.

We know that in order to be successful, we need to leverage as many resources as possible, cooperate with as many agencies, businesses and members of the community as we can and generally organize ourselves in a way that collaborates with the great array of partners in Cuyahoga County who seek environmentally sustainable solutions to climate change, clean energy development, water quality safety, transportation alternatives and overall more green environs.

In our first 2.5 years of existence we think have worked in that manner, but also believe that the process of developing this plan has been helpful in honing the work we should be engaged in for the next phase of our Department's life.

I am available for any individual meetings or calls regarding this proposal and of course for hearings you may have regarding the project.

Thanks for your time, consideration and insights,

Sincerely,

Mike Foley

September 1, 2017

Department Strategy 1: Work collaboratively with our partners to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in the geographic confines of Cuyahoga County

Initiatives:

- 1:** Join with other cities and organizations to formulate a comprehensive Cuyahoga County Climate Change Action Plan that deals with both mitigation and adaptation by August 2018.
- 2:** Join with other cities and organizations by declaring an adherence to the Paris Climate Accords by September 1, 2017.
- 3:** Determine a measurement and reporting protocol by January of 2018.
- 4:** Measure all greenhouse gas emissions in Cuyahoga County by the spring of 2018 and set realistic greenhouse gas reduction goals and strategies by July 2018.
- 5:** Devise a dashboard that details comparative greenhouse gas emissions (by sector and geographically) by September of 2018.

County Goals/Priorities Supported:

- 1.3 Deploy sustainability practices to support our competitive advantage
- 10.3 Strengthen and expand relationships with new and existing community partners
- 11.2 Work with partners to align, scale and sustain efforts to achieve systems-level solutions

Performance Measures

GHG emission levels

Department Strategy 2: Increase resources for clean energy and environmentally sustainable programs, projects, and practices in Cuyahoga County

Initiatives:

- 1:** Devise a variety of streams of funding for programs, projects, and practices
 - a. Convene a stakeholders group with the goal of establishing an ongoing Sustainability fund with adequate resources similar to the **Arts and Culture Fund** which has a consistent source of revenue and governance.
 - b. Help create a **Clean Energy Pre-Development Fund** for business/local government/institutional/residential sectors to affordably help analyze, measure and communicate renewable and energy efficiency measures.
 - c. Rethink/re-develop a **clean energy loan and/or grant program** for business/local government/institutional/residential use.

- 2:** Utilize devised funding streams to support a variety of programs, projects, and services that address at least one of the following three anticipated outcomes:
 - a. Reduction in greenhouse gas emissions within Cuyahoga County
 - b. Reduction in cost of clean energy
 - c. Increased business and workforce opportunities in sustainability-related industries (e.g. solar, wind, energy efficiency)

County Goals/Priorities Supported:

- 1.3 Deploy sustainability practices to support our competitive advantage
- 10.3 Strengthen and expand relationships with new and existing community partners
- 11.2 Work with partners to align, scale and sustain efforts to achieve systems-level solutions

Performance Measures

Amount of funding available (\$)

of projects proposed

of projects funded

of projects in process of being completed (What does this mean?)

of projects completed

Department Strategy 3: Increase access to alternative methods of transportation for residents and visitors to Cuyahoga County to enhance air quality and the environmental health of the community

Initiatives:

- 1:** Work with NOACA, RTA, Clevelanders for Public Transportation and others to help create a bigger vision for transportation alternatives and help municipalities develop more projects to transform the transportation system.
- 2:** Encourage bike and pedestrian infrastructure on County-funded projects (e.g. bike lanes, signal systems, timing).
- 3:** Encourage bike and pedestrian infrastructure in private developments where new construction or renovation occurs.
- 4:** Apply for and leverage grant funding and existing county resources to increase the accessibility to and utilization of bike share in low-income areas.
- 5:** Encourage the development of electric vehicle infrastructure throughout the county

County Goals/Priorities Supported:

- 1.3 Deploy sustainability practices to support our competitive advantage
- 10.3 Strengthen and expand relationships with new and existing community partners
- 11.2 Work with partners to align, scale and sustain efforts to achieve systems-level solutions

Performance Measures

- Miles of pedestrian trails and bike lanes
- Bike share utilization (riders and # of miles traveled, CO₂ reduced)
- Reduction in GHG emissions resulting from bike share riding
- EV infrastructure – amount of charging stations
- E.V.'s – amount of vehicles licensed in the county

Department Strategy 4: Increase community awareness, knowledge, and advocacy regarding environmental issues, policies, and initiatives

Initiatives:

- 1:** Develop an effective and measurable educational campaign to inform citizens and the community about climate change and sustainability issues for residents of Cuyahoga County.
- 2:** Continue to coordinate local clean energy brown bags for Cuyahoga County environmental and sustainability leaders.
- 3:** Help organize policy advocacy across the County for environmental and sustainability leaders in order to positively affect state and national changes.
- 4:** Measure and track equity and inclusion for sustainability initiatives for Cuyahoga County residents.
- 5:** Convene a regional consortium of county sustainability leaders to increase best practice information sharing and opportunities for collaboration.
- 6:** Create and continuously enhance a best management practices information repository for use by all of our partners

County Goals/Priorities Supported:

- 1.3 Deploy sustainability practices to support our competitive advantage
- 10.3 Strengthen and expand relationships with new and existing community partners
- 11.2 Work with partners to align, scale and sustain efforts to achieve systems-level solutions
- 11.5 Speak out on issues, policies and decisions at the state and federal level

Performance Measures

Measure of outreach-Number of participants in outreach events (if discernible)

Utilization of BMP repository (site hits, etc.)

Process metric (for first several years): What you are doing (# of events held, # of attendees)

Department Strategy 5: Convene and collaborate with partners to advocate for improvements to water quality for Cuyahoga County residents and visitors

Initiatives:

- 1:** Assist in discerning and describing our region’s fresh water advantage. Understand its ecological and economic value to the County and work with others including NEOPIPE, Cleveland Water Alliance, CRWP, Port of Cleveland, and others in appropriate promotion and protection.
- 2:** Assist the Port of Cleveland, Ohio EPA and others in developing strategies for the beneficial re-use of dredged materials from the Cuyahoga River in order to reduce the need for Combined Disposal Facilities and keep materials out of Lake Erie.
- 3:** Work with and assist NEORSD in overall water quality work and in the development of a larger green infrastructure program for the County.
 - a.** Support/encourage cities to use NEORSD Member Community Infrastructure Program funds to support green infrastructure
- 4:** Work with County Planning to devise an environmentally sustainable land use strategy

County Goals/Priorities Supported:

- 1.3 Deploy sustainability practices to support our competitive advantage
- 10.3 Strengthen and expand relationships with new and existing community partners
- 11.2 Work with partners to align, scale and sustain efforts to achieve systems-level solutions

Performance Measures

- Measure of improvements in water quality
- Reduction in watershed Beneficial Use Impairments
- # of Projects using NEORSD storm water infrastructure funding

Department Strategy 6: Demonstrate the county’s leadership in environmental stewardship by increasing the utilization of sustainable, green practices throughout the organization

Initiatives:

- 1:** Have the county install renewable energy systems and storage in as many of its facilities as feasible and reduce usage in its buildings through energy efficiency measures
- 2:** Create and spearhead an internal council to drive intra-organizational sustainability efforts
- 3:** Develop a protocol/policy for procurement practices which incorporates environmental sustainability as a metric for determining County vendors.
- 4:** Work with our County departments and resources to develop green storm water infrastructure policies for Cuyahoga County related projects to lessen storm water runoff and gain benefits from greater amounts of green infrastructure.
- 5:** Work with Cuyahoga County Public Works to create a sustainable vehicle replacement plan that includes both hybrid and electric vehicles
- 6:** Determine and assist in implementing additional pre-tax incentives to encourage utilization of alternative transportation

County Goals/Priorities Supported:

- 1.3 Deploy sustainability practices to support our competitive advantage
- 10.3 Strengthen and expand relationships with new and existing community partners
- 11.1 Align and enhance internal resources to build a strong foundation for operational and strategic success
- 11.2 Work with partners to align, scale and sustain efforts to achieve systems-level solutions

Performance Measures

- % reduction in electricity usage for county buildings
- % of vehicle fleet replaced with hybrid and electric vehicles
- % of departments implementing internal sustainability policies

Department Strategy 7: Enhance land use practices to spur greater clean energy development, reduce local greenhouse gas emissions and, ultimately, positively impact local air quality positively

Initiatives:

- 1:** Support development of the ten most suitable landfill sites for large scale solar farms in Cuyahoga County
- 2:** In collaboration with municipalities and partner organizations, devise a comprehensive tree canopy enhancement plan for the county at large
- 3:** Encourage the use of integrative planning strategies wherever possible
- 4:** Continue to partner with CSU, CWRU, the City of Cleveland and others on a local MicroGrid project for Cuyahoga County.
- 5:** Work with groups like the Metroparks, the Trust for Public Land, the Cuyahoga Greenways Partnership and others on increasing the amount of trails and usable greenspace in the County for hiking, biking and recreational uses.

County Goals/Priorities Supported:

- 1.3 Deploy sustainability practices to support our competitive advantage
- 10.3 Strengthen and expand relationships with new and existing community partners
- 11.2 Work with partners to align, scale and sustain efforts to achieve systems-level solutions

Potential Metrics

- Estimated CO₂ sequestration attributable to enhanced tree canopy
- % tree canopy in Cuyahoga County
- # of new trees added
- # of landfill solar sites developed
- # of trails in the County