



Partnership for a Green City Louisville

2009-2010 Focus

Climate Change is the overarching focus of the Partnership for 2009-2010. Louisville Metro Government and the University of Louisville have signed national commitments to reduce GHGs. These commitments require these two partners to prepare GHG emission inventories and to prepare plans to reduce their emissions. The plans will entail energy reduction/conservation, transportation, education, recycling, carbon sequestration by vegetation, and open-space creation and management. There are activities of our three institutions that directly or indirectly can impact climate change. While focusing on climate change, we will specifically work on:

- **Energy Efficiency (E2)**— Jefferson County Public Schools, UofL, and Louisville Metro Government have signed on as ENERGY STAR partners. ENERGY STAR is a joint program of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the U.S. Department of Energy. ENERGY STAR helps us all save money and protect the environment through promoting energy-efficient products and practices. The Partners measure current energy performance, set goals, track savings, and reward improvements. The Partners' total energy bill is currently \$40 million a year and is increasing 5 to 7 percent annually. E2 includes work with the green buildings, green fleets, environmental education, environmental health, and green purchasing teams.
- **Open Space and Biodiversity**—Louisville is currently engaged in the largest park expansion program in the United States. The ambitious City of Parks Program includes not only land purchase but also tree planting, protection of streams, inventorying and enhancing biodiversity, promoting children in natural settings, education programs, and the construction of sustainable infrastructure. The program could include environmental education, environmental health, research of biodiversity and green infrastructure, and using public property to develop communitywide ecological corridors. The Urban Forestry Team falls under this category.
- **Stormwater Management**—The Metropolitan Sewer District has entered into an agreed order with the U.S. EPA, the U.S. Justice Department, and the Kentucky Environmental Public Protection Cabinet (EPPC) to spend \$800 million to \$1 billion in the next decade to manage combined sewer overflows. The three partners collectively own more than 25,000 acres (10 percent of the county excluding roads), that could be managed to reduce or eliminate off-site stormwater flows to reduce combined sewer overflows. The program would include physical plants, engineers, education, and environmental health to develop model approaches to wet-weather management. The Green Infrastructure Team, chaired by MSD, addresses stormwater management.

• **Promotion of Alternate Transportation to Reduce Vehicle Miles Traveled—**

Louisville Metro Government is actively working to create new bikeways and to improve pedestrian-friendly walkways. JCPS has received grants to identify pedestrian-friendly walkways to schools to reduce dependence on fossil-fuel powered transportation. Cumulatively, more than 24 million vehicle miles are driven each day in Jefferson County, which is equivalent to 1,000 times around the globe. JCPS school buses travel 97,000 miles daily or the equivalent of four times around the world. The Partners would work collaboratively to identify ways to reduce their transportation demands by making the community more pedestrian and bike friendly, promoting bus and shared vehicle transportation, and working to reduce total transportation demands. This work would involve transportation, environmental education, green buildings, fleets, and environmental health.

• **Zero Waste Community—**The Partners collectively dispose of tons of waste annually. Many corporations and communities are moving to Zero Waste Goals. Zero waste suggests that the entire concept of waste should be eliminated. Instead, waste should be thought of as a “residual product” or simply a “potential resource” to counter our basic acceptance of waste as a normal course of events. Opportunities, such as reduced costs, increased profits, and reduced environmental impacts, are found when returning these “residual products” or “resources” as feed stock to either natural and/or industrial systems. Zero waste focuses on investing in green businesses and infrastructure rather than in landfills. Corporations in our area that have adopted this concept include Toyota and Lexmark. Cities that have adopted Zero Waste Goals include Boulder (CO), Seattle (WA), Berkley and San Francisco (CA), Bellefontaine (OH), Carrboro (NC), and the Central Vermont Waste Management District. This goal would involve physical plants, waste, recycling, economic development, purchasing, and education.

• **Local Food Initiative—**Louisville Metro Government has studied the economic potential of locally grown food. UofL has committed to purchasing at least 10 percent of its produce used in on-campus food preparation from local growers. The area surrounding the Louisville metropolitan area is primarily rural, and the economic vitality and sustainability of the area is enhanced if local agricultural markets are strengthened. The Partners currently, directly and indirectly, purchase food that on average travels 1,200 miles to reach Louisville. This model of food delivery is unsustainable. Viable rural economies would help reduce Louisville’s urban sprawl. The Partnership will focus on using its collective purchasing power to support local agriculture. In addition to produce, the purchase of local eggs, dairy, poultry, and meat products would support farmers in Kentucky. Other opportunities to indirectly support local agriculture through Community Supported Agriculture (CSA), community gardens, farmers markets, and food fairs are happening will also continue to be explored. The initiative would also be an excellent healthy eating initiative and would be something the public would be interested in. Supporting local growers is another sustainable practice and could also decrease transportation costs for food delivery. The local foods team covers this issue.

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