



GREEN & SUSTAINABLE RESOURCE GROUP DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

A sustainable Greater Downtown is vital to the economic, social and environmental health of the Dayton region. It is critical to creating a region that lives within its means — and has all the resources it needs for a robust future.

To achieve sustainability, the community must fully understand two basic concepts: (1) Green activities are the specific actions that lead to sustainability, such as composting, reducing energy use and creating transportation alternatives to the car. (2) A sustainable city meets its present economic, social and environmental needs without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs.

From an economic standpoint, implementing green projects will lower operating costs for businesses and homeowners, reduce pollution costs, make the community a more attractive place to live, work and play — and give Greater Downtown a competitive advantage when it comes to attracting and retaining jobs. From a social standpoint, green projects will create a community in which everyone is treated with justice. And from an environmental standpoint, green projects will protect the health of and nurture Greater Downtown's people and places.

Implementing green projects will do all this and more. Yet most importantly, it will help Greater Downtown and the Dayton region become sustainable — a necessary ingredient for all communities seeking prosperity.

Overall goal

Attract businesses, residents and workforce to Greater Downtown while implementing green projects that improve environmental stewardship, public health and quality of life and create a sustainable city.

Core objectives

- Through green practices, become sustainable.
- Become an economically sustainable and thriving hub of the region.
- Reach a very high level of environmental health for all citizens.
- Achieve social justice for all citizens.
- Reduce Greater Downtown's carbon footprint.

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

Nationally rank Dayton’s “greenness” and use that and other information to create and implement a Sustainability Action Plan for Greater Downtown.

To attract business, investment and residents, it’s critical Greater Downtown’s appeal as a sustainable community and green place to live, work and play be enhanced. This can be achieved by improving its national ranking with SustainLane criteria, which include numerous initiatives for creating a sustainable community. Those include expanding the use of alternative transportation and energy sources, improving air and water quality, supporting recycling and composting initiatives, and providing incentives for high-density and environmentally friendly development.

1. Use the SustainLane city sustainability criteria as a standard by which to measure and nationally rank Dayton’s greenness and use that information, along with the U.S. EPA Green Communities Toolkit, to create a Sustainability Action Plan for Greater Downtown Dayton.

- The SustainLane methodology (www.SustainLane.com) for the 2008 U.S. City Rankings was determined using primary and secondary research, including data sources used in past years’ rankings and a new water supply metric. The 50 most populous U.S. cities, based on U.S. Census Bureau statistics, were ranked. (For a complete list of the 16 criteria that have been identified by SustainLane as important characteristics in determining a sustainable community, along with a brief description of each, see Green & Sustainable Appendix A.)
- The U.S. EPA Green Communities Toolkit (www.epa.gov/greenkit/index.htm) is a web-based planning guide designed to help communities access tools and information to help them become more sustainable. (For a complete list of the steps used in the Green Communities Toolkit, see Green & Sustainable Appendix B.) The process includes:

- (a) assessing where the community is, including an evaluation of current economic vitality, social health and quality of life, and environmental health;
- (b) analyzing where the community is going by determining trends, predicting the future based on those trends and using those indicators to guide the future;
- (c) crafting a vision statement that lays out where the community wants to be; and
- (d) creating an action plan to map out how the community will get there.

2. Already, the City of Dayton has appointed a Sustainability Officer to manage sustainability efforts and guide the development and implementation of the Sustainability Action Plan. The City also will examine the possibility of hiring a full-time grant writer to secure funding for sustainability efforts.

Develop and nurture green job growth and economic development.

A green job is any job created or retained that provides a product or service that results in enhanced stewardship of Earth's natural resources and consumption of energy. Green jobs are those that allow either less energy consumption or greater productivity, thereby reducing total energy use and/or having a benign environmental impact.

1. Promote and support green development in Greater Downtown. Promote high density, mixed use and infill development.
2. Evaluate best practices in other cities and municipalities related to green job development.
3. Conduct an inventory of and survey Greater Downtown businesses, organizations and institutions regarding their green activities, goals and initiatives.
4. Identify and catalog green research being conducted in Greater Downtown and its application to commercial use.
5. Examine the feasibility of establishing a Green Resource Center in Greater Downtown, possibly at Tech Town, that would serve as a hub for area businesses and organizations regarding green initiatives. Provide entrepreneurial support for emerging and established businesses to help them grow their presence in green markets. Support would include training, information on government and grant and funding opportunities, and networking.
6. Create and implement a marketing campaign to attract targeted businesses and organizations to Greater Downtown. Strategies would include identifying trigger points for regional businesses in growth and/or relocation mode, reviewing existing research regarding site selection, and engaging the Ohio Department of Development and Ohio EPA to evaluate economic development opportunities and strategies.
7. Support the locally grown foods industry (www.miamivalleygrown.org).

Support the Dayton Regional Green Task Force’s Green Business Certification Program (GBCP).

The GBCP was formulated by a committee of large and small businesses and institutions from the Dayton region. The committee reviewed existing green business certification programs from Indianapolis, Columbus and other cities to determine the best approach for a Dayton region program. A certification program with a balance between its rigor and ease of compliance, along with a solid focus on sustainability education, were overall goals. The GBCP is a program of the Dayton Area Chamber of Commerce.

The GBCP can yield important economic development results. Significant participation by Dayton area businesses will show firms seeking to relocate that this region understands and embraces green development, sustainability and environmental responsibility. Many cities, counties and regions that already have such programs in place have seen the benefits. Now, the Dayton area needs to push involvement in this program to keep the economic development playing surface level and to show its commitment to energy conservation and the environment.

Investigate the feasibility of establishing a City of Dayton geothermal well field utility.

There are many advantages of geothermal energy. This proposed utility would connect businesses and organizations to a source of constant temperature groundwater, which building owners could use as a heating and/or cooling source. Use of this utility could replace existing HVAC systems with an energy-efficient and environmentally friendly renewable resource. Such a utility would permit owners to cost-effectively convert their existing (and build new) buildings to use more efficient building heating and cooling systems. It would dramatically lower energy costs for businesses and homeowners located in Greater Downtown — providing a competitive advantage when it comes to attracting and retaining new businesses and residents.

1. The City of Dayton is working on a competitive bidding process to hire a consultant who can investigate the feasibility of creating this utility. The City already has committed \$100,000 for this feasibility study.
2. Review the consultant’s findings and determine next steps.

Revise public policy to encourage green and sustainable development.

Sustainable development is a pattern of resource use that aims to meet human needs while preserving the environment so these needs can be met not only in the present, but also for future generations. Also known as smart growth, sustainable development recognizes connections between development and quality of life. It leverages new growth to improve the community. The features that distinguish smart growth in a community vary from place to place. In general, smart growth invests time, attention and resources in restoring community and vitality to center cities and older suburbs. Smart growth is more urban-centered, transit and pedestrian oriented, and has a greater mix of housing, commercial and retail uses. It also preserves open space and many other environmental amenities. While there is no one-size-fits-all solution, successful communities tend to have one thing in common: a vision of where they want to go and what things they value in their community — and their

plans for development reflect these values. Development in Greater Downtown should proceed with these principles in mind.

Strategies might include:

- Offer tax incentives and reduced fees.
- Develop incentives for establishing minimum LEED certification for new development.
- Expedite service for plan reviews of green projects.
- Revise City codes to readily accommodate green building projects and produce green building guidance documents.
- Develop a mechanism for offering technical support for aspects of green building, such as methods, site evaluation and material selection.
- Offer marketing support/publicity for successful LEED certified projects.
- Offer density bonuses: Developers would be able to build at a higher density than the zoning permits in exchange for the developer including some affordable residences.

Develop, promote and support sustainable transportation initiatives.

Sustainable transportation systems make a positive contribution to the environmental, social and economic sustainability of the communities they serve. Such systems diminish traffic congestion, noise and air pollution while increasing social interaction. They also lead to safer streets and healthier lifestyles, reduce infrastructure stress, improve access, and create new economic opportunities. A Greater Downtown where the car is not a necessity is a more bustling neighborhood, with more people on the streets walking and biking at all times of the day and evening. It is a neighborhood where environmental stewardship is a shared community value and residents' carbon footprints are significantly reduced. And it is a neighborhood where new and existing businesses thrive along bustling corridors. Already, as a result of the Plan, the City of Dayton passed a Complete Streets Resolution. It was the first city in the state of Ohio to do so.

While transportation recommendations are primarily outlined in that section of the Greater Downtown Plan, as well as in the River Corridor and Active Lifestyles recommendations, below are some that are of particular import to efforts to create a sustainable city.

1. Support the development of such transportation alternatives as walking, biking and public transit, including a streetcar. Investigate and implement ways to encourage and enhance the use of alternative transportation, rather than the automobile.
2. Develop and implement a program providing car-free streets on weekends, similar to Portland, Oregon's Sunday Parkways (www.streetfilms.org/archives/portlands-sunday-parkways) and Ciclovía (www.streetfilms.org/archives/ciclovía).
3. Make Greater Downtown more walkable (www.walkscore.com).
4. Continue to evaluate the purchase of a City of Dayton fleet of Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) and hybrid vehicles.
5. Promote carpooling via the development of a "rider/driver" database exchange on the City of Dayton Web site.

Develop and promote urban re-forestation efforts.

Urban re-forestation provides many benefits besides the obvious scenic enhancement and recreational values. Trees and other landscaping reduce the intensity and pollution of stormwater runoff in densely developed urban environments. They also decrease the heat island effect, higher air temperatures that can increase peak energy demand, air pollution, greenhouse gas emissions, and heat-related illness and mortality. Urban re-forestation also contributes economic value to surrounding properties. Planting trees increases urban canopies on streets, while green roofs, community parks and gardens provide cleaner air and water, sequester carbon dioxide emissions, increase property values and improve quality of life — using low-cost technology to filter pollution.

1. Develop a program for tree planting to increase urban canopies on streets.
2. Support the use of green roofs on existing and new buildings.
3. Support community gardens.
4. Create community parks and pocket parks.

Promote initiatives that encourage recycling and composting.

Reducing garbage creation can have significant positive effects on the environment and public health while providing new economic opportunities. While reducing the amount of disposable items used in households and residences is the first key to accomplish this goal, both recycling and composting also can contribute to zero-waste efforts. Composting can replace and supplement the use of chemical fertilizers that can contaminate surface and groundwater, and commercial composting ventures even can be successfully developed. Recycling is an important way for individuals and businesses to reduce the waste they generate and reduce the negative impact of that waste. And because recycling is big business in Ohio, recycling also supports the many companies and employees doing this important work.

1. Evaluate recycling and composting use at downtown businesses and organizations, such as restaurants.
2. Emphasize to residents and businesses the benefits of implementing citywide recycling and composting programs and provide economical means to carry out such programs. The City of Dayton has developed initiatives, such as distributing larger recycling bins in target areas, to increase household recycling to 10 percent, with a long-term goal of meeting the national average of 33 percent.

Implementation

Lead Organization: City of Dayton

Supporting Partners: Dayton Area Chamber of Commerce
DP&L
Montgomery County Solid Waste District
UD/WSU/AFIT master's program in clean energy
DTMA-assisted committee
EMTEC alternative energy forums
Miami Conservancy District
Five Rivers MetroParks
Environmental Advisory Board

Potential Funding Sources: Ohio Department of Development
Ohio Air Quality Development Authority state stimulus funding grants
Loan guarantees in Clean Coal and Alternative Energy projects
ARRA Department of Energy stimulus funds
Green Energy Ohio
Entrepreneurial Signature Program at Coalition
Ohio Department of Natural Resources
Ohio and U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
foundation grants

Supporting Materials:

- To download *Green Business Certification Program* requirements, go to www.DRG3.org
- SustainLane (www.SustainLane.com) criteria in Green and Sustainable Appendix A
- The U.S. EPA Green Communities Toolkit (www.epa.gov/greenkit/index.htm) criteria in Green & Sustainable Appendix B