

VOLUME 2
chapter
ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY



GOAL		POLICIES FOR DECISION MAKERS	FOR MORE INFORMATION, SEE PAGE:
ENVIRONMENTAL LEADERSHIP			
1	<i>National and international recognition of New Orleans as a leader in sustainable urbanism</i>	1.A. Expand and support the Office of Coastal and Environmental Affairs.	13.15
		1.B. Support and promote exemplary local sustainable practices.	13.16
		1.C. Develop ecotourism in New Orleans.	13.18
CLIMATE CHANGE			
2	<i>Citywide preparation for future climate change and reduced contribution to global warming</i>	2.A. Complete a citywide Climate Action Plan	13.19 - 13.20
		2.B. Become a designated Department of Energy Clean City	13.20
SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT PATTERNS			
3	<i>A physical environment characterized by Smart Growth patterns of development</i>	3.A. Encourage mixed-use, walkable and “bikeable” neighborhoods.	13.20
		3.B. Encourage the development and use of alternative forms of transportation.	13.21
ENERGY EFFICIENCY & RENEWABLE ENERGY			
4	<i>Energy-efficient buildings, services and everyday practices</i>	4.A. Ensure that homes, commercial buildings and public facilities are “weatherized” and energy-efficient.	13.21
5	<i>Expanded renewable energy technology development, production, and use</i>	5.A. Provide support and resources to start up companies in renewable energy technologies.	13.22
		5.B. Promote and facilitate small scale production of renewable energy on individual properties.	13.23
		5.C. Expand the use of renewable energy sources by public utilities.	13.24
GREEN BUILDING			
6	<i>A built environment that illustrates best practices in sustainable building and design</i>	6.A. Establish voluntary and mandatory green building standards.	13.25
		6.B. Require all municipal facilities to adopt sustainable building practices.	13.26

GOAL		POLICIES FOR DECISION MAKERS	FOR MORE INFORMATION, SEE PAGE:
URBAN AGRICULTURE, GARDENING, AND OPEN SPACE			
7	<i>Ample opportunities for all residents to participate in and benefit from urban agriculture and community gardening</i>	7.A. Support and promote urban agriculture and community gardens on public and private property.	13.27
8	<i>Enhancement of the environmental value of urban green spaces.</i>	8.A. Promote restoration of native plants in natural areas and public rights-of-way that are not suitable for pedestrian or recreation access.	13.29
		8.B. Incorporate the concept of the tree canopy as habitat in the city's urban forestry program.	13.29
		8.C. Introduce sustainable methods in park maintenance and operations	13.30
SOLID WASTE			
9	<i>Reuse of materials, facilities and structures wherever possible</i>	9.A. Consider renovating and reusing existing public facilities or other available buildings before constructing new buildings wherever possible.	13.31
		9.B. Promote and facilitate adaptive reuse of under utilized buildings.	13.31
		9.C. Facilitate deconstruction as an alternative to demolition and promote reuse of salvaged building materials wherever possible.	13.32
10	<i>Resource conservation and waste reduction in everyday practices</i>	10.A. Encourage recycling and composting in homes, businesses and institutions.	13.32
		10.B. Promote sustainable practices in municipal operations.	13.33
		10.C. Ban or tax the use of plastic bags in stores.	13.34
		10.D. Promote responsible waste management and reduction that minimizes impacts on the environment.	13.34
		10.E. Increase public awareness of sustainable practices.	13.34
ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH			
11	<i>Soil, water and air free from toxic contamination</i>	11.A. Prevent illegal disposal of hazardous waste.	13.35
		11.B. Identify, remediate and redevelop contaminated sites.	13.35



fact sheet

ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

- In 2007, about 41 percent of the city's total carbon emissions came from motor vehicles and transportation.¹
- At current rates of global green house gas emissions, scientists project a 7-15 inch rise in sea levels by the end of this century.²
- In 2007, about 20 percent of the New Orleans' carbon emissions came from buildings.
- As of March, 2009, there were 36 LEED registered projects in New Orleans, including 10 single-family homes, 3 multi-family housing projects, 5 schools, and several community centers, federal government buildings, and commercial facilities.³
- Over half of the solid waste produced in New Orleans in 2007 was compostable.⁴
- Before Hurricane Katrina there were 49 active community gardens and three school gardens in New Orleans. As of 2009, there are 36 active community gardens and urban farms and 11 public school gardens.
- Hazardous levels of arsenic are present in the soil of several areas of New Orleans. However, sediment deposited by Katrina floodwaters is not expected to cause additional adverse health impacts to residents.
- New Orleans has 15 identified brownfield sites and one superfund site: the Agriculture Street Landfill.
- Before Hurricane Katrina, lead poisoning affected about 25% of New Orleans children.⁵
- An estimated 90 percent of all housing units in New Orleans built prior to 1940 could contain some lead-based paint hazard.
- Measurements of air pollutants by the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality in 2007 indicated pollutant levels that were not high enough to pose a threat to the health of New Orleans residents.⁶

WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

- Many of New Orleans' neighborhoods exhibit several of the principles of smart growth, including walkable, close-knit neighborhoods and a mix of land uses, yet residents remain primarily dependent on automobiles and other motorized transportation, which are responsible for the majority of the city's greenhouse gas emissions. Green building and advancements in the use of renewable sources of energy are both on the rise and contribute to decreasing the city's carbon footprint. However, climate change and projected sea level rise continue to pose significant threats to the city unless current rates of greenhouse gas emissions are drastically curbed. Environmental health hazards such as illegal dumping, lead contamination, and arsenic in soil are present in several areas of the city, but the city's overall air quality is good.

1 City of New Orleans Carbon Footprint Report. July, 2009.

2 Bindoff, N.L., et al. http://ipcc-wg1.ucar.edu/wg1/Report/AR4WG1_Print_Ch05.pdf, in City of New Orleans Carbon Footprint Report. July, 2009.

3 US Green Building Council

4 City of New Orleans Carbon Footprint Report. July, 2009.

5 GreeNOLA Plan

6 City of New Orleans Carbon Footprint Report. July, 2009.

FINDINGS

- New Orleans is increasingly known nationally as a hub of innovation in sustainable practices.
- The City’s Office of Coastal and Environmental Affairs is working to implement numerous improvements to the city’s environmental quality and sustainability, but it is severely understaffed and under-resourced.
- New Orleans City Council has adopted the GreenOLA plan to make New Orleans more sustainable, but without clear implementation and funding direction.
- The potential for renewable energy production and adoption in New Orleans is significant but has not been widely adopted.
- Traditional New Orleans vernacular architecture is often well-suited to the local climate and thus inherently energy-efficient.
- Green building and adoption of renewable energy are both on the rise.
- Several sources of renewable energy—including solar, wind, and hydrokinetic sources—hold significant potential for further development in New Orleans.
- Interest in urban agriculture and community gardens is on the rise throughout New Orleans.

CHALLENGES

- Providing increased capacity and resources for the Office of Coastal and Environmental Affairs.
- Implementing the GreenOLA plan over time.
- Ensuring ongoing funding for the New Orleans Energy Smart program.
- Becoming less reliant on non-renewable sources of energy.
- Reducing the city’s greenhouse gas emissions.
- Providing increased transportation choice for all residents.
- Setting an example of sustainable practices by establishing sustainable municipal building and operating procedures.
- Initiating citywide recycling and composting programs.
- Informing residents about energy efficiency and everyday resource conservation.
- Encouraging local businesses, residents, and government agencies to invest in energy-efficient building and renovation strategies.
- Implementing building code amendments that encourage energy-efficient building practices while keeping building costs affordable.
- Removing regulatory and zoning barriers to urban agriculture.
- Obtaining the estimated \$300 million to adequately remediate an estimated 86,000 properties with lead-contaminated soils in New Orleans.
- Safely removing lead-based paint from buildings.
- Redeveloping brownfield sites and the superfund site appropriately.

Acronyms

To aid in reading this section, below is a list of acronyms used within the text:

CAO	Chief Administrative Office	LSU	Louisiana State University
CVB	Convention and Visitors Bureau	NORA	New Orleans Redevelopment Authority
CPC	City Planning Commission	OCEA	Office of Coastal and Environmental Affairs
DPW	Department of Public Works	RPS	Renewable portfolio standard
EPA	Environmental Protection Agency		
ICLE	International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives		
LaDOT	Louisiana Department of Transportation		

A Introduction

Many New Orleanians have embraced the recovery and rebuilding process as an opportunity to build better—a chance to create a healthier, more environmentally sustainable city. The public and private sectors, individual residents, and grass roots organizations increasingly take “green” and resource-efficient approaches to their redevelopment activities. Innovative and cutting-edge practices in green enterprise, planning, and design have begun to emerge all over the city. As the nation’s attention turns increasingly to the economic, ecological and health benefits of cleaner, more sustainable and more energy-efficient development and lifestyles, New Orleans is poised to become a national leader in these trends.

The Master Plan focuses on strategies to incorporate environmental quality in a variety of spheres:

- Environmental leadership through creation of a full Office of Coastal and Environmental Affairs and implementation of the GreeNOLA Plan.
- Development of a citywide Climate Action Plan
- Promotion and enhancement of sustainable development patterns through land use policies that emphasize transportation choice, walkability, compact development, and green infrastructure
- Expansion of renewable energy through implementation of the Energy Smart New Orleans Plan and other strategies
- Resource conservation and waste reduction through reuse, recycling, and energy efficiency in everyday practices
- Promotion of green building practices in municipal facilities and through incentives and regulation
- Support for urban agriculture and community gardens
- Remediation of contaminated sites and measures to prevent pollution

B Recommendations

A recommendations **Summary** linking goals, strategies and actions appears below and is followed by one or more early-action items under the heading **Getting Started**. The **Narrative** follows, providing a detailed description of how the strategies and actions further the goals. Background and existing conditions to inform understanding of the goals, policies, strategies and actions are included in Volume 3, Chapter 13.

Summary

FIRST FIVE YEARS: 2010–2014 **MEDIUM TERM:** 2015–2019 **LONG TERM:** 2020–2030

GOAL	RECOMMENDED STRATEGIES	RECOMMENDED ACTIONS:				
		HOW	WHO	WHEN	RESOURCES	FOR MORE INFORMATION, SEE PAGE:
ENVIRONMENTAL LEADERSHIP						
1. National and international recognition of New Orleans as a leader in sustainable urbanism	1.A. Expand and support the Office of Coastal and Environmental Affairs.	1. Expand responsibilities (Chapter 12) and identify funding sources for increased capacity in the City's environmental affairs agency.	Chief Administrative Office	First five years	Federal grants; city budget; program fees	13.15 - 3.16
	1.B. Support and promote exemplary local sustainable practices.	1. Establish a certification award for businesses that illustrate exemplary sustainable practices.	Office of Coastal and Environmental Affairs, other environmental, economic development, and business interests	First five years	Private funding: philanthropic and corporate sponsorship	13.16
		2. Establish an annual showcase of local best practices in sustainability.	Office of Coastal and Environmental Affairs, Office of Economic Development, Office of Human Relations, City Council Arts and Culture Committee, Convention and Visitors Bureau, local environmental stewards and leaders.	First five years	Corporate and philanthropic sponsorship	13.17
		3. Support and strengthen the Office of Coastal and Environmental Affairs' current efforts to improve efficiency and sustainability through cooperation with all relevant City departments.	Office of Coastal and Environmental Affairs; City departments	Ongoing	General Fund, cooperative endeavor	13.18

FIRST FIVE YEARS: 2010–2014

MEDIUM TERM: 2015–2019

LONG TERM: 2020–2030

GOAL	RECOMMENDED STRATEGIES	RECOMMENDED ACTIONS:				
		HOW	WHO	WHEN	RESOURCES	FOR MORE INFORMATION, SEE PAGE:
1. National and international recognition of New Orleans as a leader in sustainable urbanism	1.C. Develop ecotourism in New Orleans.	1. Create tourist guides and materials that promote green buildings and ecological tours.	New Orleans Tourism Marketing Corporation, working group with environmental and business representatives	First five years	Business community	13.18
		2. Explore helping to establish a Director of Ecotourism position, possibly within the Convention and Visitor's Bureau (CVB)	Convention and Visitors Bureau	Medium term	Business community	13.19
CLIMATE CHANGE						
2. Citywide preparation for future climate change and reduced contribution to global warming	2.A. Complete a citywide Climate Action Plan.	1. Establish a Climate Change Policy Advisory Group.	Convened by City Council, OCEA	First five years	ICLEI Climate Protection Campaign technical assistance for planning process.	13.19 - 13.20
	2.B. Become a designated Department of Energy Clean City.	1. Office of Coastal and Environmental Affairs should apply for Clean City status.	Coalition led by OCEA	First five years	Department of Energy Clean Cities program	13.20
SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT PATTERNS						
3. A physical environment characterized by Smart Growth patterns of development	3.A. Encourage mixed-use, walkable and "bikeable" neighborhoods.	1. Allow mixed uses in land use and zoning in strategic locations such as around transit nodes.	(See Chapter 14 Land Use Plan.)	First five years	Staff time	13.20
		2. Encourage infill development and preservation of historic, walkable neighborhoods.	(See Chapter 5 Housing and Neighborhoods, and Chapter 6 Historic Preservation.)	First five years	Staff time	13.21
		3. Repair sidewalks, street lighting, and provide streetscape enhancements to encourage pedestrian activity.	(See Chapter 10 - Community Facilities, Services and Infrastructure.)	Medium term	General fund; grants	13.21
	3.B. Encourage the development and use of alternative forms of transportation.	1. Expand the range of available transportation choices, including a comprehensive network of bike paths and up-graded public transit.	(See Chapter 11 Transportation.)	Medium term	Federal funds; grants	13.21

FIRST FIVE YEARS: 2010–2014
MEDIUM TERM: 2015–2019
LONG TERM: 2020–2030

GOAL	RECOMMENDED STRATEGIES	RECOMMENDED ACTIONS:				
		HOW	WHO	WHEN	RESOURCES	FOR MORE INFORMATION, SEE PAGE:
ENERGY EFFICIENCY & RENEWABLE ENERGY						
4. Expanded renewable energy technology development, production and use Energy-efficient buildings, services and everyday practices	4.A. Ensure that homes, commercial buildings, and public facilities are “weatherized” and energy-efficient.	1. Continue to fund, implement, and improve the Energy Smart New Orleans program.	City Council, Entergy New Orleans	First five years	Annual budget of \$5-7 million supported by charge to rate payers.	13.21
		2. Perform an energy efficiency survey of all public buildings and facilities.	CAO/Property Management Department	Medium term	Energy management fund (see below).	13.22
		3. Establish an energy management fund to provide capital for energy efficiency improvements to public facilities.	City Council	Medium term	Philanthropic funding, <i>e.g.</i> Clinton Climate Initiative	13.22

FIRST FIVE YEARS: 2010–2014 **MEDIUM TERM:** 2015–2019 **LONG TERM:** 2020–2030

GOAL	RECOMMENDED STRATEGIES	RECOMMENDED ACTIONS:				
		HOW	WHO	WHEN	RESOURCES	FOR MORE INFORMATION, SEE PAGE:
5. Expanded renewable energy technology development, production and use	5.A. Provide support and resources to start-up companies in renewable energy technologies.	1. Continue to support the Solar America Cities Program to accelerate the adoption of solar technologies.	OCEA	First five years	Solar America Cities Program resources for expansion of solar technology	13.22
		2. Provide for the unique spatial and infrastructure needs of high-tech industries in land use and zoning.	(See Chapter 10 Community Facilities, Services and Infrastructure, and Chapter 14—Land Use.)	First five years		13.22
		3. Provide tax and other incentives to start-up companies in renewable energy technologies.	(See Chapter 9 -Sustaining and Expanding New Orleans' Economic Base.)	Medium term		13.22
	5.B. Promote and facilitate small-scale production of renewable energy on individual properties.	1. Reduce zoning and other legal barriers to small-scale renewable energy production.	CPC, Department of Safety and Permits	First five years	CZO	13.23
		2. Support and promote community purchasing initiatives to reduce the cost of purchasing and adopting renewable energy technologies.	OCEA, private and nonprofit partners	First five years	Staff time; grants	13.23
		3. Promote the use of solar- and wind-generated energy as resilient to flooding and disasters.	OCEA, Office of Emergency Preparedness, neighborhood-based emergency preparedness initiatives	First five years	Staff time; grants	13.23
		4. Provide residents and businesses with accessible, user-friendly information about renewable energy.	OCEA	First five years	Private and nonprofit partners	13.23
		5. Establish a Power Purchase Agreement and feed-in tariffs between small power producers and Entergy.	City Council, Entergy	Medium term	Staff time	13.23

FIRST FIVE YEARS: 2010–2014 **MEDIUM TERM:** 2015–2019 **LONG TERM:** 2020–2030

GOAL	RECOMMENDED STRATEGIES	RECOMMENDED ACTIONS:				
		HOW	WHO	WHEN	RESOURCES	FOR MORE INFORMATION, SEE PAGE:
5. Expanded renewable energy technology development, production and use	5.C. Expand the use of renewable energy sources by public utilities.	1. Promote Entergy's Geaux Green program.	OCEA	First five years	Entergy	13.24
		2. Adopt renewable energy standards for all city facilities as part of the Climate Action Plan.	OCEA, CAO, Property Management Department	First five years	ICLEI Climate Protection Campaign technical assistance for planning process	13.24
		3. Advocate for the adoption of a renewable portfolio standard for the State of Louisiana.	LA State Representatives	First five years	Legislation has already been drafted	13.24
GREEN BUILDING						
6. A built environment that illustrates best practices in sustainable building and design	6.A. Establish voluntary and mandatory green building standards.	1. Establish a Green Building Task Force to propose amendments to the building code.	City Council, OCEA, private and nonprofit green building experts	First five years	Staff time	13.25
		2. Amend the building code to include mandatory green building standards.	Green Building Task Force (see above)	Medium term	Existing local and national environmental organizations, philanthropic funding.	13.25
	6.B. Require all municipal facilities to adopt sustainable building practices.	1. Coordinate municipal facility construction projects and negotiate cost-efficient purchases of energy-efficient materials and equipment by purchasing them in large quantities.	Chief Administrative Office/Property Management Department	First five years	Staff time	13.26
		2. By city ordinance, require all municipal facilities to adhere to an established standard of sustainable building practice.	City Council, Green Building Task Force	Medium term	Green Building Task Force (see above)	13.26
		3. Study options for "greening" City Hall.	Mayor's office, CAO/ Department of Property Management	Medium term	Consult with other city managers who have implemented green municipal buildings	13.26
	URBAN AGRICULTURE, GARDENING, AND OPEN SPACE					
7. Ample opportunities for all residents to participate in and benefit from urban agriculture and community gardening	7.A. Support and promote urban agriculture and community gardening on public and private property.	1. Remove zoning and regulatory barriers to urban agriculture and community gardens.	CPC	First five years	Food Policy Advisory Committee	13.27

FIRST FIVE YEARS: 2010–2014

MEDIUM TERM: 2015–2019

LONG TERM: 2020–2030

GOAL	RECOMMENDED STRATEGIES	RECOMMENDED ACTIONS:				
		HOW	WHO	WHEN	RESOURCES	FOR MORE INFORMATION, SEE PAGE:
7. Ample opportunities for all residents to participate in and benefit from urban agriculture and community gardening	7.A. Support and promote urban agriculture and community gardening on public and private property.	2. Encourage food growing on public and private property that is compatible with the character of the surrounding neighborhood, from the backyard garden to the entrepreneurial farm, through partnerships with private and nonprofit partners.	Parks and Parkways, various private and nonprofit partners, Food Policy Advisory Committee	First five years	Grants	13.27
		3. Perform an inventory of possible gardening sites and determine their suitability for gardening (e.g., perform soil contamination tests).	OCEA, Parks and Parkways, NORA	First five years	Partner with Parkway Partners and neighborhood associations to assist with identifying potential sites.	13.27
		4. Make blighted and adjudicated property available to private and nonprofit partners who agree to maintain the land as public community gardens.	NORA	First five years	Parks and Parkways, various private and nonprofit partners	13.27
		5. Explore community orchards as an interim use for vacant land.	NORA	First five years	Community land trusts (See Chapter 5 Housing and Neighborhoods), LSU Agricultural Center	13.28
		6. Provide incentives such as city assistance in debris removal or reduced water fees to encourage reuse of vacant properties for urban agriculture.	Health Department, OCEA, Sewerage and Water Board, NORA	First five years	Staff time; Sewerage and Water Board	13.28
		7. Establish schoolyard greening programs.	OCEA, Parks and Parkways, Parkway Partners, schools	First five years	Philanthropic funding (see, e.g., www.schoolyards.org).	13.28
		8. Explore the establishment of a conditional use permit for sales of food grown site at a community garden or urban farm.	CPC	First five years	Staff time	13.28
		9. Remove zoning and regulatory barriers to farmers markets and farm stands.	CPC	First five years	Staff time	13.29
		10. Explore additional funding opportunities for farmer's markets and community gardening/urban agriculture.	CPC, Food Policy Advisory Committee	First five years	Staff time	13.29

FIRST FIVE YEARS: 2010–2014 **MEDIUM TERM:** 2015–2019 **LONG TERM:** 2020–2030

GOAL	RECOMMENDED STRATEGIES	RECOMMENDED ACTIONS:				
		HOW	WHO	WHEN	RESOURCES	FOR MORE INFORMATION, SEE PAGE:
8. Enhancement of the environmental value of urban green spaces	8.A. Promote restoration of native plants in natural areas and public rights of way that are not suitable for pedestrian or recreation access.	1. Continue or initiate restoration, elimination of exotic plants and planting of natives and nature education programs in natural areas.	Mayor's Office of Coastal and Environmental Affairs; LSU AgCenter; Non profit organizations	First five years	Staff time; Grants	13.29
		2. Establish native plantings in natural area and public rights of way where appropriate	Parks & Parkways; DPW; LaDOT	Medium term	Staff time	13.29
	8.B. Incorporate the concept of the tree canopy as habitat in the city's urban forestry program.	1. Raise public awareness through publications and education programs	Parks & Parkways	Medium term	Staff time	13.29
	8.C. Introduce sustainable methods in park maintenance and operations.	Use alternatives to pesticides and herbicides, recycled and recyclable materials, solar panels, artificial turf for intensively used athletic fields, natural lighting and ventilation when possible.	Parks & Parkways and any successor organizations	Medium term	Staff education and training; new materials. Seek grants.	13.30
SOLID WASTE						
9. Reuse of materials, facilities and structures wherever possible	9.A. Consider renovating and reusing existing public facilities or other available buildings before constructing new buildings wherever possible.	1. Establish and utilize standard procedures for performing cost-benefit analysis of adaptive reuse options when acquiring new facilities.	CAO/Department of Property Management, other city agencies	First five years	Staff time	13.31
	9.B. Promote and facilitate adaptive reuse of under utilized buildings.	1. Provide for adaptive reuse possibilities in land use and zoning.	CPC	First five years	CZO	13.31
	9.C. Facilitate deconstruction as an alternative to demolition, and promote reuse of salvaged building materials wherever possible.	1. Coordinate with demolition processes to provide for deconstruction wherever feasible for buildings slated for demolition.	Code Enforcement, NORA, independent deconstruction services	First five years	Existing deconstruction services	13.32
10. Resource conservation and waste reduction in everyday practices	10.A. Encourage recycling and composting in homes, businesses, and institutions.	1. Fully restore city recycling facilities.	New Orleans City Council Sanitation and Environmental Enforcement Committee.	First five years	General fund	13.32
		2. Require all municipal facilities to provide recycling.	Chief Administrative Office/Property Management Department	First five years	Establish an energy management fund (see above).	13.32

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GOAL	RECOMMENDED STRATEGIES	RECOMMENDED ACTIONS:				
		HOW	WHO	WHEN	RESOURCES	FOR MORE INFORMATION, SEE PAGE:
10. Resource conservation and waste reduction in everyday practices	10.A. Encourage recycling and composting in homes, businesses, and institutions.	3. Provide recycling receptacles in public places.	Department of Sanitation	First five years	Capital Funds	13.32
		4. Allow limited composting on residential properties.	CPC, Department of Safety and Permits, Health Department	First five years	CZO	13.33
		5. Develop a composting facility and provide city-wide composting service, including curbside pick-up.	Department of Sanitation	Medium term	Start up grants; fees	13.33
	10.B. Promote sustainable practices in municipal operations.	1. Implement a green procurement policy.	OCEA, CAO, City Purchasing	First five years	Staff time	13.33
		2. Offer rewards to City employees who commute by walking, biking, or public transit.	Chief Administrative Office	First five years	General fund	13.33
		3. Replace the city's vehicle fleet with hybrid and/or fuel-efficient vehicles.	Chief Administrative Office	Medium term	Estimated cost savings of up to \$1,500 per vehicle per year.	13.34
	10.C. Ban or tax the use of plastic bags in stores.	1. Convene a task force to build support for a ban or tax on plastic bags.	OCEA, New Orleans City Council	First five years	Staff time	13.34
	10.D. Promote responsible waste management and reduction that minimizes impacts on the environment.	1. Create a long-term, strategic plan to address waste management and reduction in the city.	Led by the Department of Sanitation in coordination with the Office of Coastal and Environmental Affairs.	First five years	Staff time	13.34
	10.E. Increase public awareness of sustainable practices.	1. Continue to improve the OCEA web site to provide public information.	Office of Coastal and Environmental Affairs	First five years	Staff time	13.34
		2. Partner with other public agencies and community organizations to provide educational information and outreach on sustainable living.	OCEA, various environmental and community organizations	Medium term	Staff time	13.35
ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH						
11. Soil, water and air free from toxic contamination	11.A. Prevent illegal disposal of hazardous waste.	1. Provide proper disposal services for hazardous waste items, including residential curbside pick-up.	OCEA, Health Department, Department of Sanitation	First five years	(See Chapter 10—Community Facilities, Services and Infrastructure.)	13.35
		2. Provide adequate code enforcement of environmental health hazard protections.	Health Department	First five years	(See Chapter 5—Neighborhoods and Housing.)	13.35

FIRST FIVE YEARS: 2010–2014 **MEDIUM TERM:** 2015–2019 **LONG TERM:** 2020–2030

GOAL	RECOMMENDED STRATEGIES	RECOMMENDED ACTIONS:				
		HOW	WHO	WHEN	RESOURCES	FOR MORE INFORMATION, SEE PAGE:
11. Soil, water and air free from toxic contamination	11.A. Prevent illegal disposal of hazardous waste.	3. Provide public education about the causes and effects of environmental contamination.	OCEA, Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality, Health Department	First five years	US EPA	13.35
	11.B. Identify, remediate and redevelop contaminated sites and buildings.	1. Provide public education about environmental contaminants and available resources for remediation.	OCEA, Health Department	First five years	Use City web site as an information platform.	13.35
		2. Create and maintain a database of environmental hazards and conditions.	OCEA, Health Department	First five years	US EPA, university partners (e.g. Center for Bioenvironmental Research; Tulane Environmental Health Sciences; LSU Agricultural Center)	13.36
		3. Identify and apply for federal, state, and other funding to remediate brownfields and other contaminated sites.	OCEA, New Orleans Brownfields Administrator	First five years	U.S. Economic Development Administration and EPA grants, private funding	13.36
		4. Provide increased funding and support for lead remediation initiatives for homes, schools, and gardens.	OCEA, Health Department—Lead Poisoning Prevention Program	First five years	Technical assistance: Tulane/Xavier Center for Bioenvironmental Research. Funding assistance: Operation Pay dirt; public and philanthropic funding.	13.36
		5. Explore neighborhood-based projects to remove toxins from contaminated vacant land using plantings.	OCEA, Health Department	First five years	Partnerships with universities (e.g. Center for Bioenvironmental Research; Tulane Environmental Health Sciences; LSU Agricultural Center) and neighborhood groups.	13.36
		6. Regularly monitor closed landfills to ensure that they are not causing pollution or hazards.	Office of Coastal and Environmental Affairs	First five years	Staff time	13.37
		7. Continue strict environmental monitoring of the Gentilly landfill.	Office of Coastal and Environmental Affairs	First five years	Staff time	13.37
		8. Provide free or reduced-cost soils testing to individual property owners and residents.	OCEA, Health Department	First five years	Partner with existing resources that have capacity to perform soils testing (e.g. universities see above).	13.37

Getting Started

These items are short-term actions that can be undertaken primarily with little expenditure and will help lay the groundwork for the longer-term actions that follow.

- Determine budgetary requirements for an expanded Office of Coastal and Environmental Affairs by the time of the 2010 City operating budget.
- Establish an ecotourism marketing campaign.
- Establish a Climate Change Policy Advisory Group to steward the completion of a citywide Climate Action Plan.
- Form a working group to establish criteria for a Green Business Certification award. Criteria should be established within 6 months and applications made available on the City web site. Private funding should be sought from philanthropic and corporate sources.
- Reduce zoning and other legal barriers to small-scale renewable energy production and to urban agriculture on private property.
- Promote community purchasing initiatives for spreading the adoption of solar technologies by individual households.
- Advocate for the adoption of a renewable portfolio standard for Louisiana.
- Implement a sustainable procurement policy for all municipal facilities and operations.
- Promote deconstruction as an alternative to demolition wherever possible.
- Continue to implement the Energy Smart New Orleans program.
- Offer incentives to all City employees who commute by foot, bike, or public transit.
- Ban or tax the use of plastic shopping bags in stores.
- Establish a Green Building Task Force to study feasible ways to amend the building code to encourage sustainable building techniques.
- Establish an event committee to plan an annual showcase of local best practices in sustainability.

Narrative

Below is a more detailed narrative of the various goals, strategies and actions highlighted in the “Summary” chart.

ENVIRONMENTAL LEADERSHIP

GOAL 1

National and international recognition of New Orleans as a leader in sustainable urbanism

1.A Expand and support the Office of Coastal and Environmental Affairs.

Several of the recommendations in this section rely on or involve the Office of Coastal and Environmental Affairs (OCEA). The GreenNOLA Plan, adopted in 2008 as the city’s plan for sustainable rebuilding, also indicates multiple environmental initiatives that should be implemented by this office. **(See Volume 3, pages 13.1–13.2 for more information on the GreenNOLA Plan.)** Many other U.S. cities that have successfully implemented policies for sustainable growth and development maintain an office of environmental protection or similar “umbrella” entity that coordinates initiatives on a broad range of topics such as those discussed in this chapter (green building, climate change planning, solid waste reduction, *etc.*). At the time

of this writing, however, the New Orleans OCEA is extremely underfunded and understaffed, especially considering the degree and scope of environmental challenges that the city faces. Moreover, the city's administrative structure is such that many different offices and entities are responsible for various aspects of environmental stewardship and, because of their multiplicity, are often not well coordinated. An OCEA with increased resources and capacity is essential to coordinating these disparate initiatives and would provide tremendous return on investment in helping steward significant quality of life improvements as well as marketing and business initiatives around green business that are important to New Orleans' future economic success. The GreenNOLA Plan and the items listed below can provide guidelines for many of OCEA's future initiatives and a framework for determining a more appropriate size for this office.

RECOMMENDED ACTION

1. *Expand responsibilities (See Chapter 12) and identify funding sources for increased staff capacity in the City's environmental affairs agency.*

Who: CAO office

When: First five years

Resources: Federal grants; city budget; program fees

Use this plan and the GreenNOLA Plan to identify the scope of activities that the Office should undertake, and perform cost analysis to determine appropriate budgetary adjustments by the time of the 2010 city budget.

1.B Support and promote exemplary local sustainable practices.

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

1. *Establish a certification award for businesses that illustrate exemplary sustainable practices.*

Who: OCEA; other environmental groups, economic development; business interests

When: First five years

Resources: Private funding; philanthropic and corporate sponsorship.

MAYOR DALEY'S GREENWORKS AWARDS

Chicago Mayor Daley's GreenWorks Awards help to promote Chicago as a green city by recognizing businesses, non-profits, schools and government agencies whose buildings, practices, and products or services are environmentally responsible. The GreenWorks Awards are presented annually. Awards are presented in three categories: Green Buildings, Green Practices, and Green Products. Past awardees have included educational institutions, design firms, construction companies, retail stores, nonprofits, and manufacturing companies.*

* <http://tinyurl.com/yfc5yf3> . Retrieved March, 2009.

Just as restaurants, hair salons, and car repair facilities can carry ratings from local and national third-party reviewers like Zagat, Yelp!, and AAA, New Orleans could implement a sustainability mark of excellence to denote exemplary green practices among businesses and institutions. Recognition could even come with a similar window sticker like a Zagat rating for a restaurant: perhaps a green "G" to denote a business or organization that has been "Rated G for Green."

The system should be developed by the OCEA in partnership with other environmental advocates and business and economic development interests. Certification criteria should be jointly developed by the group within 6 months. Criteria should be meaningful from an environmental perspective

(so that not "just anyone" can obtain certification) but also feasible and attainable from the perspective of individual businesses (e.g., not so stringent that no one would apply). Criteria

should be demonstrable, objective and verifiable without undue cost or hassle (e.g., verifying that a business has recycling containers available to patrons by visiting the establishment, etc.). Application certification materials should be available online in a user-friendly format.

Administrative costs of the program could be covered in part by City funding and in part by private grants. Corporate sponsorship as well as philanthropic funding sources should be pursued.

2. *Establish an annual showcase of local best practices in sustainability.*

Who: OCEA; Office of Economic Development; Office of Human Relations; City Council Arts and Culture Committee; Convention and Visitors Bureau, local environmental stewards and leaders.

When: First five years

Resources: Corporate and philanthropic sponsorship

New Orleans is fast becoming a hub of creativity and innovation in sustainable building and design and renewable energy technologies. One way to showcase and celebrate this extraordinary emergence of talent and innovation to the city and to the nation is to host an annual (or biennial) “Green Fest,” which could include tours of green buildings and urban farms, special locally-grown menu items in participating restaurants, workshops and lectures on sustainable building practices, and a national green design competition. Participants from around the country and the globe could come to learn about sustainable practices being implemented in New Orleans. A volunteer component could recruit participants to weatherize houses, perform soil and water testing, or otherwise “pitch in” to help make New Orleans green.

Several similar, themes citywide initiatives have been successful and should be seen as precedents:

- > The Prospect 1 art biennial is an example of a city-wide, multi-faceted event that drew local and national attention and brought visitors to locations throughout the city to experience art installations and attend events.
- > The New Orleans Home and Garden Show featured a “Green Zone” of sustainable products and services for builders, consumers, and homeowners. A similar concept could be adopted as part of the Green Fest.

LOWER 9TH WARD CLEAN ENERGY HOMES TOURS

The Alliance for Affordable Energy and the Holy Cross Neighborhood Association facilitated the donation of ten Sharp photovoltaic systems for a local community center and nine homes. These photovoltaic systems have become an ongoing educational tool for the city through a quarterly “Clean Energy Homes Tours” in which visitors can tour the projects and learn about energy-efficient technologies and solar power.

SOLAR DECATHLON, WASHINGTON, D.C.*



The Solar Decathlon is a biannual event hosted by the US Department of Energy to showcase innovations in solar-powered design. Each year, 20 teams of university and college students come to the National Mall to construct an entire solar-powered house and showcase their design to visitors. In past

years the event has drawn thousands of visitors a day to the Mall to view and learn about solar powered homes.

* <http://www.solardecathlon.org/>

- > Project 30-90 is an environmentally-conscious music festival scheduled for September, 2009 which will have a reduced carbon footprint through strategies like solar and wind power sources, paperless ticketing, and on-site recycling.¹
- > The city hosted its first-ever Earth Day festival in April, 2009, sponsored by the Louisiana Bucket Brigade.
- > The New Orleans Spring Garden Show in April, 2009 hosted a statewide green fair with more than a dozen green non profits and 25 green vendors taking part in Global Green's "Build it Back Green" initiative.

If some or all of these events were coordinated under a single organization or theme, the result could attract visitors from around the region and throughout the U.S.

A number of US cities hold similar events. The City of Miami's "MiaGreen" expo and conference is just one example: www.miagreen.com. Seattle hosts an annual tour of green homes that could also serve as a good precedent; it typically hosts between 5-10,000 participants annually.

Alternatively (or in addition), New Orleans could apply to host the international Greenbuild Conference, an annual conference sponsored by the U.S. Green Building Council that proclaims to be "the world's largest" conference and expo dedicated to green building.² Greenbuild takes place in a different U.S. city every year.

To get started, an event committee should be formed, including representatives of the OCEA, economic development interests, the Office of Human Relations, the City Council Arts and Culture Committee, the Convention and Visitors' Bureau, and representatives of several prominent citywide environmental initiatives. The committee should identify funding and marketing strategies, including prominent keynote speakers.

3. *Support and strengthen the Office of Coastal and Environmental Affairs' current efforts to improve efficiency and sustainability through cooperation with all relevant City departments.*

Who: Office of Coastal and Environmental Affairs; City departments

When: Ongoing

Resources: General Fund, cooperative endeavor

Many City departments address the issues of environment and sustainable practices without inter-departmental cooperation. This method of operations may be viewed as lacking efficiency, cumbersome, and at times duplicating departmental efforts. The Master Plan urges cooperation between City departments for common goals including local sustainable practices with the Office of Coastal and Environmental Affairs being responsible for implementing such matters relating to environment and sustainable practices city-wide.

1.C Develop ecotourism in New Orleans.

Ecotourism is an emerging segment of the tourism industry that New Orleans has not previously targeted, despite the fact that the city is becoming known around the nation and the world for its green rebuilding practices. The web site www.neworleans.com has a useful directory of "Green New Orleans" initiatives that has the beginnings of a promotional piece for tourism.³

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

1. *Create tourist guides and materials that promote green buildings and ecological tours.*

Who: New Orleans Tourism Marketing Corporation, working group with environmental and business representatives

When: First five years

Resources: Business Community

1 <http://project3090.com/>

2 www.greenbuildexpo.org

3 <http://visitors.neworleans.com/community/green-new-orleans.html>

2. Explore helping to establish a Director of Ecotourism position, possibly within the Convention and Visitor's Bureau (CVB).

Who: Convention and Visitors Bureau

When: First five years

Resources: Business Community

A working group with representatives of New Orleans Tourism Marketing Corporation, Convention and Visitors Bureau (CVB), OCEA, Business Council, and other business and environmental representatives should develop a shared strategy for marketing ecotourism in New Orleans. First steps could include creating tourist guides and materials that promote green buildings and practices and ecological tours. Ultimately, a position within the CVB such as a Director of Ecotourism could be established.

CHICAGO CLIMATE ACTION PLAN

The Chicago Climate Action Plan spells out investments the city and state should make—such as transportation infrastructure to reduce auto dependence—as well as actions that individual citizens can take to save money and slow the effects of global warming. A Climate Task Force, established by Mayor Richard Daley, included dozens of experts and a nationally recognized research advisory committee, leading scientists in climate change, business and civic leaders, and a finance committee that recommended tools for funding the proposed actions. The Task Force worked to develop goal for greenhouse gas emissions reductions that was "sufficient to avoid a climate so altered that scientists agree there will be adverse impacts; advantageous for Chicago by improving the quality of life and boosting the economy; and feasible given current technologies and resources." *

* City of Chicago Department of Environment: www.chicagoclimataction.org. Retrieved March, 2009.

CLIMATE CHANGE

GOAL 2

Citywide preparation for future climate change and reduced contribution to global warming

2.A Complete a citywide Climate Action Plan.

Numerous US cities have developed and begun to implement climate action plans that outline the city's policies and strategies for reducing greenhouse gas emissions and preparing for the inevitable effects of global warming, including actions that city agencies, private institutions and organizations, and individuals will undertake.⁴ As discussed above, in New Orleans it will be particularly important for the city to develop a coordinated strategy for mitigating the effects of the rise in sea level that is expected to occur over the next 100 years. Because of the city's significant vulnerability to the effects of climate change, it important that it also become a global leader in urban sustainability, and adopt strategies to significantly curb its own contributions to global warming.

By signing on to ICLEI's Cities for Climate Protection Campaign in 1999, the City of New Orleans resolved to develop and implement a citywide Climate Action Plan to reduce energy consumption and associated greenhouse gas emissions. ICLEI provided support for the city to conduct a greenhouse gas report in 2009, and can also provide technical assistance in developing an action plan. The GreenOLA plan, which has already been adopted, can provide a framework for a Climate Action Plan that is specific to New Orleans.

⁴ For examples of other cities' climate action plans, see: <http://www.chicagoclimataction.org/>; <http://www.sustainable-city.org/>; <http://www.seattle.gov/climate/>; <http://www.miamigov.com/MiPlan/>; http://www.nyc.gov/html/dep/html/news/climate_change_report_05-08.shtml

RECOMMENDED ACTION

1. *Establish a Climate Change Policy Advisory Group.*

Who: Convened by City Council; OCEA

When: First five years

Resources: ICLEI Climate Protection Campaign technical assistance for planning process

In most cities that have completed climate action plans, a task force or committee of experts has coordinated the planning process in collaboration with community members and city leadership (e.g., the mayor, city council, and other city agencies). In Chicago, for instance, the Task Force charged with developing the Chicago Climate Action Plan performed scientific and economic analyses of the effects of global warming on that city and the relative costs of taking actions to mitigate them. Likewise, the New Orleans City Council and the OCEA should collaborate to convene a citywide Climate Change Policy Advisory Group to direct the process of achieving a New Orleans Climate Action Plan. The Group should be led by OCEA and should include leaders from research institutes, universities, local and national environmental initiatives, and other stakeholders and community members representing a broad range of fields and interests. ICLEI can provide technical support in developing the plan. Funding for the planning process is available through private and philanthropic sources.

2.B. Become a designated Department of Energy Clean City.

Clean Cities is a voluntary government/industry partnership program sponsored by the US Department of Energy to assist cities in petroleum consumption (a major source of greenhouse gasses). The program offers strategic, technical and funding assistance to implement petroleum use reduction strategies.⁵ There is interest among several groups in having New Orleans become a certified Clean City. Applying for Clean City designation should be done by a coalition led by OCEA and involving other partner organizations, and could be part of the Climate Action Plan.

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

1. *Office of Coastal and Environmental Affairs should apply for Clean City status.*

Who: Coalition led by OCEA

When: First five years

Resources: Department of Energy Clean Cities program

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT PATTERNS**GOAL 3****A physical environment characterized by Smart Growth patterns of development****3.A Encourage mixed-use, walkable and “bike-able” neighborhoods.****RECOMMENDED ACTIONS**

1. *Allow mixed uses in land use and zoning in strategic locations such as around transit nodes.*

Who: CPC, City Council

When: First five years

Resources: Staff time

(See Chapter 14—Land Use for more details.)

⁵ For more information, see: <http://www1.eere.energy.gov/cleancities/about.html>

2. Encourage infill development and preservation of the city's extensive historic neighborhoods.

Who: See Chapter 5 Housing and Neighborhoods

When: First five years

Resources: Staff time

(See Chapter 5—Housing and Neighborhoods, and Chapter 6—Historic Preservation for more details.)

3. Repair sidewalks, street lighting, and provide streetscape enhancements to encourage pedestrian activity.

Who: DPW

When: Medium term

Resources: Staff time

(See Chapter 10—Community Facilities, Services and Infrastructure for more details.)

3.B Encourage the development and use of alternative forms of transportation.

(See Chapter 11—Transportation for more details.)

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

1. Expand the range of available transportation choices, including a comprehensive network of bike paths and upgraded public transit.

Who: DPW; RTA

When: Medium term

Resources: Federal Funds; grants

ENERGY EFFICIENCY & RENEWABLE ENERGY

GOAL 4

Energy-efficient buildings, services and everyday practices

4.A Ensure that homes, commercial buildings, and public facilities are “weatherized” and energy-efficient.

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

1. Continue to fund, implement, and improve the Energy Smart New Orleans program.

Who: City Council; Entergy New Orleans

When: First five years

Resources: Annual budget of \$5 to 7 M supported by change to rate payers

In June, 2008, the New Orleans City Council passed a resolution to adopt the Energy Smart New Orleans Efficiency Program, which calls for making 2,500 homes and small businesses per year more energy-efficient, “weatherizing” the homes of 300 low-income and elderly customers a year at no cost to the residents, installing solar-energy systems in 500 homes per year and other energy-efficient initiatives over 10 to 15 years. In July, 2009, the City Council directed Entergy to begin implementing the Energy Smart program by adding a charge to rate payers’ bills. The estimated cost of the program is \$54 million, with an annual budget of \$5–7 million supported by the charge on rate payers’ bills.

2. *Perform an energy efficiency survey of all public buildings and facilities.*

Who: CAO/ Property Management Department

When: Medium term

Resources: Energy management fund

Performing an energy audit of all public facilities could result in significant savings over time, and would help the city target energy efficiency improvements strategically, where they would produce the greatest return on investment. The first step would be to issue a request for proposals to perform the audit. Funding for the project could come from an energy management fund.

3. *Establish an energy management fund to provide capital for energy efficiency improvements to public facilities.*

Who: City Council

When: Medium term

Resources: Philanthropic funding, e.g. Clinton Climate Initiative

The New Orleans City Council Renewable Energy Committee report of July, 2007 recommends establishing a City Energy Management Fund in the form of a revolving low- or no-interest loan fund to provide capital funding for public facility improvements specifically for efficiency and renewable. The Fund would allow the city to improve energy infrastructure, reduce ongoing energy and maintenance costs, and use the cost savings to replenish the fund for further improvements and cost saving projects. Implementation of the fund would require an executive order of the City Council.

GOAL 5

Expanded renewable energy technology development, production and use

5.A Provide support and resources to start-up companies in renewable energy technologies.

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

1. *Continue to support the Solar America Cities Program to accelerate the adoption of solar technologies.*

Who: OCEA

When: First five years

Resources: Solar America Cities Program resources for expansion of solar energy

Because of being named a Solar America City, the City received a two-year grant from the Department of Energy to complete a citywide plan for the expansion of solar technology and its adoption by the New Orleans marketplace. The program will fund workforce training and policy development initiatives as well as public education and outreach.

2. *Provide for the unique spatial and infrastructure needs of high-tech industries in land use and zoning.*

Who:

When: First five years

Resources:

3. *Provide tax and other incentives to start-up companies in renewable energy technologies.*

Who:

When: Medium term

Resources:

See also: Chapter 9—Sustaining and Expanding New Orleans' Economic Base.

5.B Promote and facilitate small-scale production of renewable energy on individual properties.

A RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

1. *Reduce zoning and other legal barriers to small-scale renewable energy production.*

Who: CPC Department of Safety and Permits

When: First five years

Resources: CZO rewrite

Zoning and permitting should explicitly allow energy production equipment such as solar panels, windmills, *etc.* on private property, and should clearly describe the scale and design features allowed to ensure that these features are compatible with the existing character of the built environment.

2. *Support and promote community purchasing initiatives to reduce the cost of purchasing and adopting renewable energy technologies.*

Who: OCEA; private and nonprofit partners

When: First five years

Resources: Staff time; grants

OCEA should facilitate partnerships between neighborhood organizations and private/nonprofit independent providers of community purchasing agreements (such as One Block off the Grid, which currently provides community purchasing in New Orleans) to provide low-cost purchasing and installation of renewable energy technologies to individual households. **(For more information on community purchasing and organizations that currently provide these services, see Volume 3, pages 13.5–13.6.)**

3. *Promote the use of solar- and wind-generated energy as resilient to flooding and disasters.*

Who: OCEA; Office of Emergency Preparedness; neighborhood-based emergency preparedness initiatives

When: First five years

Resources: Staff time; grants

OCEA should partner with existing disaster preparedness organizations, such as the Office of Emergency Preparedness and other neighborhood-based initiatives, to provide information and resources on renewable energy sources for emergency preparedness.

4. *Provide residents and businesses with accessible, user-friendly information about renewable energy.*

Who: OCEA

When: First five years

Resources: Private and nonprofit partners

With increased funding and capacity for the OCEA **(see Strategy 1.A, above)**, the office can continue to build its web site and provide user-friendly, easy-to-access public information on renewable energy adoption. The Alliance for Affordable Energy and other local partners can help to provide this information.

5. *Establish a Power Purchase Agreement and feed-in tariffs between small power producers and Entergy.*

Who: City Council; Entergy

When: Medium term

Resources: Staff time

Power Purchasing Agreements allow property owners to sell back surplus energy produced on their property to the utility company. In other words, if a homeowner has a source of

energy such as a solar panel that produces more energy than the house uses, the remaining energy is sold back to Entergy at a predetermined rate. The option for property owners to offset the cost of investing in energy producing equipment such as solar panels by profiting from the sale of surplus energy provides an added incentive to owners to invest in renewable energy. Feed-in tariffs establish a standard pricing regime and simplified eligibility and contracting for renewable energy electricity generation. To establish these standards in New Orleans, the City needs to negotiate these terms with Entergy.

5.C Expand the use of renewable energy sources by public utilities.

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

1. *Promote Entergy's Geaux Green program.*

Who: OCEA
When: First five years
Resources: Entergy

Geaux Green provides Entergy customers with the option of purchasing their energy from renewable sources for an additional fee. (As of July, 2009, the fee was as low as \$2.25 per month). The OCEA and other City agencies can promote this program to increase awareness of and participation in it.

2. *Adopt renewable energy standards for all city facilities.*

Who: OCEA; CAO; Property Management Department
When: First five years
Resources: ICLEI Climate Protection Campaign technical assistance for planning process

The 2009 greenhouse gas report for New Orleans indicates that City facilities and activities are responsible for 4 percent of the city's total greenhouse gas emissions. A campaign to reduce the emissions of City facilities by using energy from renewable sources would help offset the city's overall emissions, and would also send the important message to residents and outsiders that the City is committed to becoming more sustainable and to setting an example. This commitment can be part of efforts to complete and implement a Climate Action Plan (**see Strategy 2.A, above**). It is possible that the City could negotiate a lower cost for purchasing renewably sourced energy from Entergy.



Green roofs have been installed by many municipalities to reduce stormwater runoff and cooling costs.

3. *Advocate for the adoption of a renewable portfolio standard for the State of Louisiana.*

Who: Louisiana State Representatives
When: First five years
Resources: Legislation has already been drafted

A renewable portfolio standard (RPS) requires that a certain percentage of a utility's power come from renewable sources by a given date. Currently, 27 states have voted to implement RPSs. In January, 2009, the Louisiana Public Service Commission voted to open a study on the feasibility of an RPS for the State of Louisiana which, if passed, will require that utilities

purchase a portion of their power from renewable sources such as wind, solar and biomass. The City and its representatives in the State legislature should advocate for the passage of a RPS for Louisiana to ensure the future health and sustainability of the city, region, and state. **(See also: Chapter 10—Community Facilities, Services and Infrastructure.)**

GREEN BUILDING

GOAL 6

A built environment that illustrates best practices in sustainable building and design

6.A Establish voluntary and mandatory green building standards.

The New Orleans City Council passed an ordinance in 2007 mandating the establishment of voluntary green building standards. Several US cities have so-called “green building codes” that encourage and incentivize sustainable building features and practices, and range from climate-specific suggestions and recommendations to mandatory standards. For instance, in 2000, the City of Seattle became the first U.S. city to formally adopt a Sustainable Building Policy, offering grants to building projects that commit to LEED certification. The City of Chicago adopted the Chicago Standard in 2004, which outlines recommendations for climate-specific green building strategies based on the LEED rating system. Compliance with the Chicago Standard is incentivized by a 30-day fast-track permitting process for projects that comply.

San Francisco recently adopted one of the nation’s most aggressive green building codes which requires all new construction and renovations of large commercial spaces to meet a set of energy and water conservation standards. Chicago is also in the process of revising its building code to make some of the Chicago Standard recommendations mandatory. Portland (OR) has proposed a High Performance Green Building Policy which would amend the building code for all construction in Portland to include incentive-based green building standards. An economic analysis of the proposed policy found that it would add about 100 jobs a year to the city.

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

1. *Establish a Green Building Task Force to propose amendments to the building code.*

Who: City Council; OCEA; private and nonprofit green building experts

When: First five years

Resources: Staff time

The City can take steps to implement the 2007 ordinance (which mandated the establishment of voluntary green building standards) by forming a Green Building Task Force to review the current building code, study precedents from other cities, and develop climate-specific recommendations for New Orleans and possible incentives for achieving them. The Task Force could be jointly sponsored by the OCEA and members of City Council. Its membership should capitalize on the significant expertise in green building that exists in the private and nonprofit sectors throughout New Orleans. The Task Force should complete its recommendations within one year.

2. *Amend the building code to include mandatory green building standards.*

Who: Green building Task Force

When: Medium term

Resources: Existing local and national environmental organizations; philanthropic funding

Once a voluntary green building code is established (as described above), the Green Building Task Force should work towards the longer-term goal of making some of the

code's recommendations mandatory. Input from developers, contractors, and other building professionals will be essential to creating recommendations that are both aggressive in advancing the City's sustainability goals and also feasible for the private sector to achieve.

6.B Require all municipal facilities to adopt sustainable building practices.

Several cities and states that have instituted voluntary or mandatory green building standards have set the highest mandatory standards for public and municipal buildings. In Chicago, all city-owned municipal buildings are required to comply with the Chicago Standard (**see 6.A, above**). Washington was the first US state to mandate that all new government buildings meet LEED silver standards. Florida, Indiana, Maryland, New Jersey, Oklahoma and South Dakota have all since followed suit and enacted laws requiring that new state buildings meet LEED standards. Adopting high "green" standards for municipal buildings in New Orleans will not only set an example for the rest of the city, but could also result in significant savings in energy costs over time.

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

1. *Coordinate municipal facility construction projects and negotiate cost efficient purchases of energy efficient materials and equipment by purchasing them in large quantities.*
Who: CAO; Property Management Department
When: First five years
Resources: Staff time
2. *By city ordinance, require all municipal facilities to adhere to an established standard of sustainable building practice.*
Who: City Council; Green Building Task Force
When: Medium term
Resources: Green Building Task Force

Municipal facilities should adopt the recommendations of the green building task force (**see 6.A. above**) as standard practice for all construction projects. A new ordinance would be required by City Council to make these standards mandatory.

3. *Study options for "greening" City Hall.*
Who: Mayor's office; CAO/Property Management Department
When: Medium term
Resources: Consult with other city managers who have implemented green municipal buildings

At the time of this writing, the fate of New Orleans' City Hall is in question. A recent proposal to purchase another building to relocate City Hall to was voted down by the City Council in July, 2009 in part because opponents felt there was not enough time for sufficient public input into the decision. However, the current City Hall remains in poor condition due to years of deferred maintenance coupled with damages sustained due to Hurricane Katrina.

To signal the City's commitment to environmental quality and sustainability, the City should explore options for renovating City Hall according to contemporary sustainable building technologies and practices. To begin, the City should issue an RFP to study the feasibility of various renovation strategies, including renovation or development of a different building. However, reuse of the existing structure should be strongly considered for its symbolic value and to illustrate the City's commitment to efficient reuse.

- > **Green roofs.** Green roofs are planted rooftops that absorb storm water and heat, making a building more environmentally friendly and reducing long-term cooling costs. Many municipalities are installing green roofs on their public buildings, Chicago being the most well-known example. Buildings managed by Parks and Parkways might be good initial

candidates for retrofitting with green roofs, and may qualify for grants and other assistance to plan and begin implementing a roof greening program.

- > *Coordinate municipal facility construction projects and negotiate cost-efficient purchases of energy-efficient materials and equipment by purchasing them in large quantities.*
Enhanced coordination of construction and renovation projects across all departments could increase cost savings, particularly in purchasing special materials or equipment (such as solar panels). An asset management system such as that proposed in **Volume 2, Chapter 16—Structures for Implementation and Stewardship of the Plan** of this plan would ensure coordination among all city projects. The Office of Coastal and Environmental Affairs can assist the city in making bulk purchases of green building materials.

URBAN AGRICULTURE, GARDENING, AND OPEN SPACE

GOAL 7

Ample opportunities for all residents to participate in and benefit from urban agriculture and community gardening

7.A Support and promote urban agriculture and community gardening on public and private property.

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

1. *Remove zoning and regulatory barriers to community gardens.*
Who: CPC
When: First five years
Resources: Staff time; Food Policy Advisory Committee
2. *Encourage food growing on public and private property that is compatible with the character of the surrounding neighborhood, from the backyard garden to the entrepreneurial farm, through partnerships with private and nonprofit partners.*
Who: Parks and Parkways; various private and nonprofit partners; Food Policy Advisory Committee
When: First five years
Resources: Grants
3. *Perform an inventory of possible gardening sites and determine their suitability for gardening (e.g. perform soil contamination tests).*
Who: OCEA; Parks and Parkways; NORA
When: First five years
Resources: Partner with Parkway Partners and neighborhood associations to assist with identifying potential sites

Parkway partners and neighborhood associations can assist in identifying potential sites for gardens. NORA can assist in making available suitable vacant sites that are publicly-owned ([see below](#)).

4. *Make blighted and adjudicated property available as garden sites through renewable leases to nonprofit organizations and*



A longtime slogan of the global conservation movement is “Reduce, reuse, recycle.” The strategies in this section reflect this three-pronged strategy for sustainable growth.

public or private institutions including neighborhood groups, school districts, civic and gardening organizations, and faith communities.

Who: NORA

When: First five years

Resources: Parks and Parkways; various private and nonprofit partners

The City will make one-year renewable leases and five-year renewable leases of appropriate garden sites available to individuals and organizations at a minimal charge. Unlike the community gardens in many cities, New Orleans' community gardens are often located on private property. Parkway Partners provides technical assistance to community gardeners, but it does not secure the sites. The City can foster community gardening by providing sites from the NORA inventory of vacant lots or other city-owned land, registering the gardens, providing access to water, and assisting in creating an organizational structure with accountability to community gardeners, to the surrounding neighborhood and to the city. Small dues payments—such as \$5 or \$10 a year per plot—can help community gardens pay for small improvements over the year. Community gardens in areas with soils contaminated with lead and other toxins should be assisted in bringing in topsoil or building raised planting beds.

5. Explore community orchards as an interim use for vacant land.

Who: Health Department, OCEA; S&WB; NORA

When: First five years

Resources: Community land trusts; LSU AgCenter

Planting of fruit trees by neighborhood groups can be one way to help manage vacant land on an interim basis. The neighborhood community land trusts proposed **in Volume 2, Chapter 5—Neighborhoods and Housing** would be excellent vehicles to plant orchards as part of a stewardship program for vacant land. The caveat about contaminated soils applies for this use as well.

6. Provide incentives such as city assistance in debris removal or reduced water fees to encourage reuse of vacant properties for urban agriculture.

Who: Health Department, OCEA; S&WB; NORA

When: First five years

Resources: Community land trusts; LSU AgCenter

7. Establish schoolyard greening programs.

Who: OCEA; Park and Parkways; New Orleans Schools

When: First five years

Resources: Philanthropic funding

Programs to bring green space, trees and plantings, food production, and environmental education to school yards have been established in many cities. Particularly where older urban schools are surrounded by asphalt and concrete, these initiatives improve the environment and create opportunities for education. Detailed information on the design, funding, maintenance, sustainability, and educational programs in a successful city schoolyard program can be found at www.schoolyards.org.

8. Explore the establishment of a conditional use permit for sales of food grown site at a community garden or urban farm.

Who: CPC

When: First five years

Resources: Staff time

CHICAGO COMPOSTING ORDINANCE

In June 2007, the Chicago City Council passed an ordinance regulating small-scale compost operations, such as those founding residential backyards. Small-scale compost operations, as defined by the ordinance, are exempt from Chicago Department of Environment permit requirements. The ordinance limits the allowable size and contents of composting operations and requires that these compost operations are well-managed.*

*<http://tinyurl.com/yfgx3a7>

9. *Remove zoning and regulatory barriers to farmers markets and farm stands.*

Who: CPC
When: First Five Years
Resources: Staff time

10. *Explore additional funding opportunities for farmer's markets and community gardening/urban agriculture.*

Who: CPC, Food Policy Advisory Committee
When: First Five Years
Resources: Staff time

GOAL 8

Enhancement of the environmental value of urban green spaces

The parks and open space system represents one of the most important arenas for showing municipal leadership in exemplifying and promoting sustainable and energy-efficient management practices, reducing greenhouse gases, absorbing storm water, and eliminating toxic materials. Parks and trees are the lungs of the city, bringing myriad benefits, from improving air quality to reducing the urban “heat island” effect exacerbated by reflective, hard surfaces.

8.A Promote restoration of native plants in natural areas and public rights of way that are not suitable for pedestrian or recreation access.

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

1. *Continue or initiate restoration, elimination of exotic plants and planting of natives, and nature education programs in natural areas.*

Who: Mayor's Office of Coastal and Environmental Affairs; LSU Ag Center; Non profits
When: First five years
Resources: Staff time; Grants

An example of these natural areas include Bayou Sauvage National Wildlife Refuge, Louisiana Nature Center and Wilderness Park. Protected natural areas and nature parks put city dwellers in touch with the native landscape of their region. Nature education programs and efforts to restore native vegetation to these areas will enhance native habitat.

2. *Establish native plantings in public road, rail, drainage and utility corridors that are not suitable for pedestrian and recreation access.*

Who: Parks & Parkways
When: Medium term
Resources: Staff time

Because public rights-of-way and infrastructure corridors are linear connectors that are not suitable for pedestrian access, they are ideal places to reintroduce native plants. Once established, they also require less maintenance than lawns and shrubs because they are better adapted to local conditions. Birds and insects adapted to these areas will soon rediscover them and, if there is sufficient connectivity, the replanted public road, rail, drainage and utility corridors will provide habitat for wildlife movements.

8.B Incorporate the concept of the tree canopy as habitat in the city's urban forestry program. A continuous tree canopy is habitat for birds and other small animals.

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

1. *Raise public awareness of tree canopy as habitat in the city's urban forestry program through publications and education programs.*

*Who: Parks & Parkways
When: Medium term
Resources: Staff time*

8.C Introduce sustainable methods in park maintenance and operations, including alternatives to herbicides and pesticides, use of recycled and recyclable materials, use of solar panels for lighting and similar green management and building strategies.

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

1. *Use alternatives to pesticides and herbicides, recycled and recyclable materials, solar panels, artificial turf for intensively used athletic fields, natural lighting and ventilation when possible.*

*Who: Parks & Parkways and any successor organization
When: Medium term
Resources: Staff education and training; new materials; seek grants*

Parks are among the city's long-term assets. Increasingly, cities are pursuing more sustainable ways of managing all their assets and parks should be no exception. By focusing sustainable management in the park system, the city will also provide an educational example to private property owners of how to manage their landscapes. The city should include green and sustainable features among the design objectives of new recreation and park structures. Over time, park managers should institute sustainable and non-toxic practices in the following areas:

- > *Water use and irrigation.* Irrigation should be installed so that water use can be monitored for efficiency. Although the city currently receives water free from the Sewerage and Water Board, water conservation remains important because of the cost of treating water. Consideration should also be given to systems that can recycle storm water and gray water for irrigation. Conserving potable water for drinking purposes is a prudent practice.
- > *Natural turf.* Turf varieties should be chosen that require lesser amounts of fertilization, irrigation and mowing.
- > *Use of artificial turf for intensively used athletic fields.* Artificial turf cuts down wear and tear on natural areas and allows for more efficient use of fields. This means that fewer fields can be used for more games because fields do not have to be rested frequently between uses.
- > *Use of natural alternatives to herbicides and pesticides.* Integrated pest management and natural alternatives should be preferred.

PLASTIC BAG BANS

Plastic bags account for more than 10 percent of the debris washed up on the US coastline* and have been shown to have devastating environmental effects on habitats and wildlife and to cause chemical contamination of food streams and waterways. In March 2007, San Francisco became the first US city to ban common plastic shopping bags at supermarkets and large pharmacies. At least 30 villages and towns in Alaska have followed suit. Boston, Austin, Portland and Phoenix, and others are considering similar bans. The Canadian town of Leaf Rapids may levy fines of as much as 1,000 Canadian dollars for disobeying a ban on plastic shopping bags. China, Rwanda and Bangladesh have also prohibited free plastic bags. German stores that offer plastic bags have to pay a recycling fee. In 2003, Ireland instituted a 22-cent levy on every plastic shopping bag (raised to 32 cents in 2007),** which reduced the bags' use by 90 percent.***

* National Marine Debris Monitoring Program

** Gorn, David. "San Francisco Plastic Bag Ban Interests Other Cities." National Public Radio. March 27, 2008.

*** BBC News August 20, 2002.

SOLID WASTE

GOAL 9

Reuse of materials, facilities and structures wherever possible

9.A Consider renovating and reusing existing public facilities or other available buildings before constructing new buildings wherever possible.

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

1. *Establish and utilize standard procedures for performing cost-benefit analysis of adaptive reuse options when acquiring new facilities.*

Who: CAO/Property Management; other city agencies

When: First five years

Resources: Staff time

When City departments are presented with an opportunity to acquire new facilities, it should be standard procedure to perform a cost-benefit analysis of reuse options. To this end, the CAO's Property Management Department should establish standard procedures for undertaking such a cost-benefit analysis in a way that is streamlined, transparent, and efficient. This analysis should weigh costs and benefits of reuse and new construction on the basis of multiple "bottom lines," including not only in financial considerations, but also environmental impact, historic preservation goals, and the overall effect on neighborhoods. Environmental impacts of construction and renovation could include the greenhouse gas effects of demolition and construction as well as considerations of demolition waste. The OCEA and its partners in sustainability initiatives should be consulted in analyzing these factors. Additionally, adaptive reuse of existing under utilized or vacant facilities located in neighborhoods could further historic preservation objectives (*see Chapter 6*) and could also have a catalytic impact on neighborhood revitalization (*see Chapter 5*). Public input via the Neighborhood Participation Program (*see Chapter 15*) should be considered to determine the effect of any proposed public project on a neighborhood.

To streamline the decision-making process, a database of existing municipal properties and their specifications should be established and regularly maintained. *Chapter 8* of this plan, which discusses Health and Human Services, also recommends creation of a database of properties—both public and private—that are suitable as facilities for health and human service providers. These initiatives should be combined to produce one database to suit both purposes.

9.B Promote and facilitate adaptive reuse of under utilized buildings.

RECOMMENDED ACTION

1. *Provide for adaptive reuse possibilities in land use and zoning.*

Who: CPC

When: First five years

Resources: CZO rewrite

(See Chapter 14—Land Use.)

See also: Chapter 6—Historic Preservation.

9.C Facilitate deconstruction as an alternative to demolition, and promote reuse of salvaged building materials wherever possible.

RECOMMENDED ACTION

1. Coordinate with demolition processes to provide for deconstruction wherever feasible for buildings slated for demolition.

Who: Code Enforcement; NORA; Independent deconstruction services

When: First five years

Resources: Existing deconstruction services

Deconstruction is an alternative to demolition that salvages building components for reuse in other buildings. The OCEA and city agencies involved in code enforcement and demolitions (e.g., Code Enforcement, NORA) should coordinate with deconstruction initiatives to salvage materials for reuse whenever possible.

See also: Chapter 10—Community Facilities, Services and Infrastructure.

GOAL 10

Resource conservation and waste reduction in everyday practices

10.A Encourage recycling and composting in homes, businesses and institutions.

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

1. Fully restore city recycling facilities.

Who: New Orleans City Council Sanitation and Environmental Enforcement Committee

When: First five years

Resources: General Fund

A lack of citywide recycling service in New Orleans perpetuates an image of the city as “behind the times” and indicates incomplete recovery from Hurricane Katrina at the municipal level in the eyes of both residents and visitors, who have come to expect recycling as a basic service available in all contemporary cities. Several independent companies now provide residential curb side recycling service throughout the city and could be contracted with to provide comprehensive service for residences as well as institutions and businesses. To begin, the City Council Sanitation and Environmental Enforcement Committee should study the estimated cost of implementing a citywide recycling program. Funding for restored recycling facilities could come in part from savings due to reducing trash pickup service to once weekly instead of twice (**see Chapter 10—Community Facilities, Services and Infrastructure**).

2. Require all municipal facilities to provide recycling.

Who: CAO; Property Management

When: First five years

Resources: Establish an energy management fund

As a matter of both precedent-setting and good practice, all municipally-owned facilities should provide recycling containers in offices and public places. An energy management fund (**see above**) could provide funding for implementing this.

3. Provide recycling receptacles in public places.

Who: Department of Sanitation

When: First five years

Resources: Capital Funds

In addition to municipal facilities, the city should provide recycling canisters alongside trash receptacles in public places, including heavily-trafficked sidewalks, parks, transit stops, *etc.*

4. *Allow limited composting on residential properties.*

Who: *Department of Sanitation*

When: *First five years*

Resources: *CZO*

Many U.S. cities have adopted composting ordinances that allow and regulate small-scale compost operations to reduce solid waste and encourage sustainable practices at the household level.⁶ This is a cost-effective means of reducing solid waste that must be picked up and transported to a landfill, and also encourages gardening because of the good soil it produces.

5. *Develop a composting facility and provide city-wide composting service, including curb side pickup.*

Who: *Department of Sanitation*

When: *Medium term*

Resources: *Start up grants; fees*

Many cities also offer curb-side pickup of compostable waste. The City of San Francisco, which offers curb side compost pickup, recently passed a mandatory composting law as part of its plan to eliminate landfill waste by 2020, making it punishable by law to put compostable waste in trash containers instead of compost bins. Many cities that provide curb side compost pickup profit from the sale of soil produced by composting operations, or use the soil in city parks operations. New Orleans could begin by offering curb side pickup of compostable yard waste (*e.g.*, grass clippings and woody plants) to be used as mulch by Parks and Parkways.

10.B Promote sustainable practices in municipal operations.

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

1. *Implement a green procurement policy.*

Who: *OCEA; CAO; City Purchasing*

When: *First five years*

Resources: *Staff time*

OCEA is currently working with the CAO and City Purchasing to develop a policy memorandum for environmentally friendly procurement which will suggest that, when possible and feasible, City departments and agencies buy items such as recycled paper and plastics, remanufactured antifreeze and toner cartridges, and energy efficient office machines. Guidance is available from the State and other municipalities who are purchasing recycled and energy efficient products.⁷

2. *Offer rewards to City employees who commute by walking, biking, or public transit.*

Who: *CAO*

When: *First five years*

Resources: *General fund*

The City of New Orleans *Carbon Footprint Report* (2009) reports that more than 41 percent of the city's greenhouse gas emission come from motor vehicles and transportation.⁸ Subsidized transit fares could be used as an incentive for transit use. Secure bicycle parking and showers make bicycle commuting more convenient.

⁶ See for instance: <http://tinyurl.com/lm2ver>; [http://www.sfreycling.com/residential/composting.php?t=r](http://www.sfreycling.com/residential/composting.php?t=r;);

⁷ For more information, see: <http://cityofno.com/portal.aspx?portal=47&tabid=8>.

⁸ For more information, see Volume 3, pages 13.2–13.3. Companies around the world offer employees a bonus or other incentive for leaving their cars behind when they commute to work. Some programs subsidize public transit passes, others offer cash bonuses, reimbursements for the cost of a bike, or gift cards from local retailers. The City should offer similar incentives to its employees, including bus pass subsidies or a “green commuter” bonus.

3. *Replace the city's vehicle fleet with hybrid and/or fuel-efficient vehicles.*

Who: CAO

When: Medium term

Resources: General fund

Fuel efficient vehicles could save as much as \$1,500 per vehicle per year, and help reduce the city's total greenhouse gas emissions.⁹

10.C Ban or tax the use of plastic shopping bags in stores.

RECOMMENDED ACTION

1. *Convene a task force of environmental experts and businesses to build support for a ban or tax on plastic shopping bags.*

Who: OCEA; New Orleans City Council

When: First five years

Resources: Staff time

A plastic shopping bag ban or tax would require City Council to pass an Ordinance. The OCEA should convene a task force with support from the Mayor's Office and City Council to build support for this ordinance and study feasible methods of implementing it. The task force should include business and environmental leaders, and should include a public education campaign on the costs and benefits of the legislation. Proposed legislation should be completed within eight months.

10.D Promote responsible waste management and reduction that minimizes impacts on the environment.

RECOMMENDED ACTION

1. *Create a long-term, strategic plan to address waste management and reduction in the city.*

Who: Led by the Department of Sanitation in coordination with OCEA

When: First five years

Resources: Staff time

This effort should be led by the Department of Sanitation in coordination with the Office of Coastal and Environmental Affairs.

10.E Increase public awareness of energy efficiency and sustainable practices.

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

1. *Continue to improve the OCEA web site to provide public information on sustainable living.*

Who: OCEA

When: First five years

Resources: Staff time

OCEA can continue to improve its web site to provide comprehensive information on strategies to reduce waste, improve energy efficiency, and reduce greenhouse gas emissions in everyday living. Ample information on sustainable living strategies is available from local and national environmental initiatives. Information should be compiled and made available in an easy-to-use, searchable format.

⁹ Dollar amount is in 2009 USD. For more information, see: www.fueleconomy.gov or www.greencar.com.

2. Partner with other public agencies and community organizations to provide educational information and outreach on sustainable living.

Who: OCEA; various environmental and community organizations

When: Medium term

Resources: Staff time

As described above (**see Volume 3, Chapter 8**), numerous environmental initiatives are already operating in New Orleans. With increased funding and capacity, the OCEA could develop an educational arm that partners with other institutions to provide or help to sponsor educational information on sustainable practices in everyday life. Educational initiatives could include strategies for home energy efficiency, sustainable and cost-effective business practices; home gardening and composting workshops, and many others, and could be delivered through libraries, schools, places of worship, neighborhood organizations, and other community institutions.

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH

GOAL 11

Soil, water and air free from toxic contamination

11.A Prevent illegal disposal of hazardous waste.

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

1. Provide proper disposal services for hazardous waste items, including residential curb side pick-up.

Who: OCEA; Health Department; Department of Sanitation

When: First five years

Resources: (See Chapter 10-Community Facilities, Services, and Infrastructure)

See also: Volume 2, Chapter 10—Community Facilities, Services and Infrastructure.

2. Provide adequate code enforcement of environmental health hazard protections.

Who: Health Department

When: First five years

Resources: (See Chapter 5-Neighborhoods and housing)

See also: Volume 2, Chapter 5—Housing and Neighborhoods for more discussion on code enforcement.

3. Provide public education about the causes and effects of environmental contamination.

Who: OCEA; Health Department; Department of Sanitation

When: First five years

Resources: U.S. EPA

See Volume 2, Chapter 5—Housing and Neighborhoods for more discussion on code enforcement.

11.B Identify, remediate and redevelop contaminated sites and buildings.

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

1. Provide public education about environmental contaminants and available resources for remediation.

Who: OCEA; Health Department

When: First five years

Resources: Use City web site as an information platform

The City's web site can be expanded to contain user-friendly, easily-accessible information about environmental contamination and the resources available to residents and property owners to remediate contaminated sites and prevent poisoning. This information should be made available through either the Health Department or the OCEA, and linked to both home pages for easy reference.

2. *Create and maintain a database of environmental hazards and conditions.*

Who: OCEA; Health Department

When: First five years

Resources: US EPA; university partners

Several tests have been performed on soil samples in New Orleans both before and since Hurricane Katrina (*see Volume 2, above*). The OCEA should maintain a database combining all such test results, preferably geocoded and mapped, for use in identifying areas in need of environmental remediation. A thorough study of previously tested locations as well as collaboration with those who performed the testing should be required before future test sites are chosen. Results should be readily accessible to the public via the city web site and other avenues. University environmental research centers—such as the Tulane/Xavier Center for Bioenvironmental Research, Tulane Environmental Health Sciences program, and the LSU Agricultural Center may be able to provide technical assistance.

3. *Identify and apply for federal, state, and local funding sources to remediate brownfields and other contaminated sites.*

Who: OCEA; Health Department; Department of Sanitation

When: First five years

Resources: U.S. Economic Development Administration and EPA grants; private funding

The U.S. Economic Development Administration offers incentives for market-driven brownfields reuse through its strategic grant investments, which provide a range of support from feasibility studies, planning and technical assistance to infrastructure construction.¹⁰

4. *Provide increased funding and support to lead remediation initiatives for homes, schools, gardens, and parks and recreation facilities.*

Who: OCEA; Health Department; Lead Poisoning Prevention Program

When: First five years

Resources: Technical assistance; Tulane/Xavier Center for Bioenvironmental research; funding assistance; Operation Paydirt; public and philanthropic funding.

The most common sources of lead poisoning in children include lead-based paint in homes and schools and contamination of soil in schoolyards. As urban agriculture and gardening become increasingly popular, contamination of residential and other properties that house gardens also becomes a serious concern. These potential sources of lead poisoning should be the highest priority in future lead remediation efforts. The OCEA and Health Department can partner with existing public health organizations, Operation Paydirt, and others providing lead remediation strategies. The Tulane/Xavier Center for Bioenvironmental Research has lead research initiatives on lead contamination in New Orleans for many years, and may be able to provide data and/or technical assistance.

5. *Explore neighborhood-based projects to remove toxins from contaminated vacant land using plantings.*

Who: OCEA; Health Department

When: First five years

Resources: Partnerships with universities

10 U.S. Economic Development Administration: <http://www.eda.gov/Research/Brownfields.xml>.

While lots remain vacant, neighborhood groups can work with universities and others to learn how certain plants can clean the soil of lead and other contaminants (a process known as phytoremediation”).

6. *Regularly monitor closed landfills to ensure that they are not causing pollution or hazards.*
Who: OCEA
When: First five years
Resources: Staff time
7. *Continue strict environmental monitoring of the Gentilly landfill.*
Who: OCEA
When: First five years
Resources: Staff time
8. *Provide free or reduced-cost soils testing to individual property owners and residents.*
Who: OCEA; Health Department
When: First five years
Resources: Partner with existing resources that have capacity to perform soils testing

Several research institutions have the capacity to perform tests on soil to determine whether toxins are present. The OCEA and Health Department can partner with these institutions to make this service more accessible to residents and promote accurate information about contamination for property owners.