

Get Green Columbus



Environmental Stewardship in the 21st Century

City of Columbus • Michael B. Coleman, Mayor

2006 ANNUAL REPORT

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GET GREEN COLUMBUS 2006 ANNUAL REPORT

In January 2005, Mayor Michael B. Coleman issued a comprehensive environmental policy statement, "Get Green Columbus, Environmental Stewardship in the 21st Century." The "Green Memo" contained the Mayor's vision for pursuing responsible environmental stewardship for our community. The Green Memo set forth six priority areas:

1. Collaborating with City agencies and community leaders
2. Improving recycling efforts
3. Improving outdoor and indoor air quality
4. Improving water quality
5. Promoting green business development
6. Fostering the "greening" of Columbus

In the two years since the Green Memo was issued, the City has made significant progress in all of the priority areas set forth in the Green Memo. This report summarizes the accomplishments of 2006, and provides a look forward to 2007.

COLLABORATING WITH CITY AGENCIES AND COMMUNITY LEADERS

Mayor's Green Team

The Mayor's Green Team, which is comprised of more than 35 civic, business, environmental and community leaders as well as City staff, had a full and productive year in 2006. They met on a monthly basis, and had additional committee meetings. The highlights from each committee are as follows:

- **Green Transportation Committee** focused primarily on the City of Columbus fleet of vehicles, identifying short term projects to make environmental improvements that will make a difference while discussing longer term efforts. The Committee focused on the following three projects in 2006, each of which is discussed in greater detail below: (1) develop and implement an anti-idling policy for the city fleet and implement a pilot program to retrofit a select number of city refuse vehicles with any idling equipment; (2) work to secure grant funding in order to retrofit additional refuse trucks with anti-idling and diesel emission reduction equipment; and (3) develop and implement a pilot program to begin using biodiesel in specific parts of the City's fleet.
- **Education and Outreach Committee** was instrumental in producing a power point presentation that serves to build awareness of and publicity for Mayor Coleman's Get Green Columbus goals. The presentation's focus is on how the City is striving to improve the quality of life and the environment for the citizens of Columbus. The Education and Outreach Committee also prepared a Communications Plan Template for use by the Green Team Committees, and began planning for a Get Green Columbus Speakers Bureau, a program to train and equip key members of the Green Team to become the "Get Green Columbus Ambassadors." The Committee also assisted with the promotion of several other Get Green programs from other committees.
- **Green Buildings Committee** assisted the City of Columbus in its adoption of an ordinance that requires the recycling or reuse of 25% of the debris generated from the demolition of all commercial and multi-family structures in Columbus. The goal of recycling or reusing 25 % percent of such demolition debris not only makes environmental sense, it also makes economic sense, saving space in landfills and reducing disposal costs. This effort will also

foster creation of markets for waste so that it can be recycled into new and useful products; thereby allowing for future increases in both the markets for recycled debris as well as a potential increase and expansion of the demolition debris recycling program.

- **Green Business Committee** hosted two major events in 2006. The first was the **First Annual Green Business Case Competition**, which occurred on November 17, 2006. Nine teams of four MBA students each from four Columbus-area business schools competed in the event. The sponsor for the competition was Columbus-based Boehringer-Ingelheim Roxane Incorporated (BIRI). The competition pitted the participating teams to develop best solutions to waste management challenges at BIRI. A team from The Fisher College of Business (The Ohio State University), snagged first place. The second event was the **Columbus Get Green Business Conference**, which occurred on December 15, 2006. Mayor Coleman welcomed over 200 people to conference which showcased the success of Columbus companies that have adopted green business practices. Presentations were made by Mike Long, Executive Director of the Solid Waste Authority of Central Ohio (SWACO), Corna Kokosing Construction Company, Clean Water Ltd., North Star Café, The Ohio State University, and Honda.
- **Growth and Development Committee** focused on two projects in 2006. First, the **Brown Lot to Green Lot Pilot** focused on developing community supported agriculture projects, such as community gardens. The City of Columbus is supporting a pilot project to show that a city-owned 'Brown Lot' can be converted into a sustainable 'Green Lot' by supporting a well planned gardening group with a multi-year lease, a water supply and various resources. The goal of this project is to demonstrate that an organized entity, with the help of city services, can positively impact neighborhood development through sustainable agriculture projects. Related to this effort, the Committee developed a **Get Green Columbus: Community Garden Resource Manual**. Developing community gardens on vacant city-owned land increases the surrounding community's access to healthy foods and strengthens neighborhood infrastructure. This guide features city resources, local non-governmental programs, national organizations, funding sources and sustainability strategies for neighborhood groups and residents to utilize. Specifically, it addresses how to obtain city owned land, zoning requirements, tools, training, funds and much more to starting a community garden. The Guide will be distributed to organizations in the faith, community and health based sectors. Second, the Committee developed the **Pedal Instead** program that encourages people to walk, rollerblade and cycle to festivals and special events instead of driving gasoline-powered vehicles. This program is discussed in detail below.

IMPROVING RECYCLING EFFORTS

Blue Bag Pilot Program

The City of Columbus conducted a "Blue Bag Pilot" program in 2005-2006. The pilot lasted 63 weeks and included 12,000 households in southeast Columbus. The program allowed residents to buy a blue bag, fill it with recyclables, and then throw the blue bag in the same container as the regular trash. When the blue bag pilot began there were 46 curbside recyclers subscribers out of the 12,000 households in the pilot area. Based on the sale of blue bags, 850 households participated in the blue bag pilot - an eighteen-fold increase in participation. Moreover, the homes that participated diverted approximately 36% of their waste into the blue bags, which resulted in almost 133 tons of recyclables being diverted from the landfill. Unfortunately, however, the participation rate was too low to justify continuing the program.

Practicing What We Preach

Recycling in City Buildings

In February 2006 the City of Columbus Office Paper Recycling program was expanded to include plastic, aluminum, and steel recyclable material. In 2006, the City of Columbus diverted nearly 343 tons of recyclable materials from the Franklin County Landfill. An average Columbus family throws away approximately 1 ton of trash every year. Essentially the City's program is diverted the equivalent of 343 households of trash from the landfill for one year.

Asphalt Recycling

The City is encouraging recycling of asphalt in a number of ways. The resurfacing contracts issued by the City require the surface layer of the roadway to be milled off and replaced. In 2006, the City required the contractors performing resurfacing contracts for the City to supply the asphalt millings for use in repairing berms and shoulders. Moreover, the City's specifications for asphalt pavement allow for the use of recycled asphalt pavement to be used during paving operations. Year to date, approximately 2,580 tons of recycled asphalt materials have been incorporated into paving operations on city capital improvement projects paving operations, and 1,218 tons on private development projects.

Additionally, in 2006, Public Service's Transportation Division purchased an asphalt recycler. The asphalt recycler takes recycled asphalt paving, millings, grindings and chunk asphalt and processes it into usable asphalt. As the asphalt is broken from the road surface, it can be regenerated and reinstalled directly at the site, there is no need for materials transport, no gravel has to be dug and no waste asphalt need be dumped anywhere. There is no longer a need to dispose of all old millings at a waste site. Additionally, because there is emulsion still locked with the original asphalt, less needs to be added. There will also be a fuel savings for trucks that would normally drive to the plants to pick up asphalt and then return to the worksite.

Recycling Fly Ash in Concrete

Fly Ash is a byproduct of coal-fired electrical generating plants. The City specification for concrete and back-fill allow the use of fly ash, thus encouraging the recycling of this material. Through July 2006, 300 tons of fly ash were used in concrete in City right-of-ways, and 2,500 tons were used to backfill trenches in Columbus roadways.

Recycled Material from City Fleet

The Fleet Management Division annually collects approximately 18,000 gallons of used oil, anti-freeze, and brake fluids from vehicles it services. Central Ohio Waste Oil then recycles these fluids at no charge to the Division. Last year, Fleet Management re-treaded 700 truck tires and recycled several hundred pounds of scrap metal. Automotive and small vehicle tires are routinely collected from citizens and disposed for a nominal charge of \$1/tire. The Division recycles oil and fuel filters and will implement a program to recycle cardboard.

Buying Green Products

Change in procurement code

In 2006, City Council amended the City Procurement Code to include a preference and credit for Environmentally Preferable vendors, bidders and offerors. This will allow the City to use its purchasing power to encourage the preservation of natural resources and help keep materials out of the landfill, as well as to nurture the marketplace for environmentally preferable products and services.

Helping Our Community Recycle

Demolition Debris Recycling

In 2006, City Council amended City Code to require that 25% of the debris generated at commercial and multifamily demolitions be recycled. This is an important first step in reducing the amount of construction and demolition debris that is going to the landfill.

Education

The Refuse Collection Division's Keep Columbus Beautiful Program offers presentations to community groups, schools, churches and businesses regarding litter prevention, waste reduction and graffiti prevention. Presentations were made over 68 times, reaching 71 different groups and more than 3,124 individuals. In addition, the Refuse Collection Division is currently working with Rumpke Waste Inc. on the production of public service announcements which will be aired on both TV and radio regarding the proper disposal of yard waste.

IMPROVING OUTDOOR AIR QUALITY

Stopping Unnecessary Vehicle Emissions

Reducing Engine Idling

An **Anti-idling Policy** for City vehicles was adopted and distributed citywide. Fleet Management also distributed materials to educate employees about the positive effects of reducing engine idling, including a **Green Pamphlet** on fuel conservation and emissions reduction. Copies were placed in every City vehicle glove box and were made available to all City employees.

- The anti-idling program has already achieved success. For example, the Division of Electricity's fleet has cut fuel consumption by 7,700 gallons in 2006.
- All new refuse trucks are equipped with an automatic engine shut-off that is activated when the vehicle idles for more than five minutes without moving.
- In the winter, refuse trucks need to warm both their engines and the hydraulic fluid system. Trucks need to idle for up to an hour. To resolve this problem, the Refuse Department is experimenting with anti-idling devices that heat the engine and the hydraulic fluid, both as retrofits on existing vehicles, and for new vehicles purchased. This should result in cost savings, both in terms of fuel, and employee overtime, in addition to lowering air emissions. The City installed 10 dash-mounted solar panels in police cruisers to provide a source of energy for running equipment (radios, etc) without unnecessary idling. This pilot program appears to be a success, as the purchase of batteries and alternators for these vehicles has decreased.

Reducing Diesel Emissions

- The City has switched to low-sulfur fuel for all of its diesel fuel purchases as a result of a successful experiment conducted by Public Service's Fleet Management.
- The City worked collaboratively with the Green Team to submit a grant to U.S. EPA to fund a pilot project to retrofit nine heavy-duty diesel vehicles including City dump trucks, street cleaners, and haulers. In November 2006, U.S. EPA announced that the project was selected for further consideration. If the City obtains the grant, it will also enable the City to equip 21 additional refuse trucks with engine pre-heaters. The project will eliminate 5 pounds and 739 pounds per year of particulate matter and nitrogen oxides, respectively.
- In addition to these grant-funded retrofits, the City will look to retrofit approximately five pre-1999 trucks with oxidation catalysts by the middle of 2007.

Using Alternative Fuels

- Biodiesel is a renewable diesel fuel, typically made from soybeans and manufactured in Ohio. Typically it is blended with petroleum diesel before being used in any standard diesel engine. Blends of 5% biodiesel (B5) and 20% biodiesel (B20) are popular. B20 biodiesel cuts several tailpipe emissions an estimated 8-15% and cuts net carbon dioxide emissions by 15%. Currently, two Divisions within the City are experimenting with biodiesel – the Refuge Collection Division and the City’s Compost facility. The early signs look good, and this program should be expanded in 2007.
- The City is currently investigating the use of compressed natural gas (CNG) as a clean alternative to diesel emissions. The Department of Utilities, Division of Sewerage and Drainage operates four CNG pickup trucks. Several additional CNG vehicles should be purchased in 2007.

Reducing Energy Use

- The City is in the process of converting all of its traffic lights from incandescent bulbs to LED bulbs. LED (Light Emitting Diodes) bulbs are small, solid light bulbs which are extremely energy-efficient. LED bulbs do not radiate light in 360 degrees as an incandescent does. The light will be bright where you point it. These bulbs last 10 times as long as compact fluorescent and 133 times longer than typical incandescent. Since LEDs do not have a filament, they are not damaged under circumstances when a regular incandescent bulb would be broken, and hold up well to jarring and bumping. Also, LED’s use a fraction of the wattage of incandescent bulbs. Although LED’s are expensive, the cost is recouped over time. To date, approximately 10% of the City’s traffic lights have been replaced, resulting in a total savings to our operating budget of over \$26,000.

Purchase better performing vehicle

- The City added updated hybrid and alternative fuel vehicles on the November 2006 Universal Term contracts for vehicles. Public Service’s Fleet Division is working with the Green Team to evaluate a plug-in hybrid vehicle.

Encourage Bicycling

Pedal Instead

- Pedal Instead encourages area residents to ride their bicycles to and from City-sponsored public festivals. The program was launched at the Grange Insurance Family Fun Fest in 2006; in 2007, the City intends to make it available for 7 events. Pedal Instead provides secure, supervised special parking for bicycles and educates the general public about bicycling as more than only a recreational or fitness activity. Pedal Instead promotes the advantages of cycling as a means of commuting, specifically in this case, to and from festivals.



Making Streets More Bike Friendly

- As the City works to improve streetscapes, it strives to makes its streets more bike-friendly. One recent example is on Morse Road, where both bike paths and bike lanes were added during reconstruction. In 2007, the City plans to update its Bicycle Plan to prioritize future efforts regarding bike traffic improvements.

Bike Paths

- In 2006, Columbus Recreation and Parks Department constructed an additional 2.4 miles of recreational bike/pedestrian trails, bringing the total City miles to 47. The Department anticipates adding 5.5 miles in 2007. Also in 2007, the Department will construct dedicated bike paths on sections of the Olentangy Trail and Alum Creek Trail.

Air Quality Index Communication and Action Plan

- The Columbus Public Health Department joined the Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission (MORPC) in 2006 in developing this communication plan. Under the plan, air quality “alerts” are issued through MORPC if the levels of selected air pollutants (ozone and particulate matter) exceed standards established by the Environmental Protection Agency. Columbus Public Health provides information in these alerts concerning the possible health effects to sensitive populations from exposure. These alerts are issued to media outlets, and to the general public through phone, e-mail and website announcements.

IMPROVING INDOOR AIR QUALITY

Healthy Homes Program

The goal of the Columbus Health Department’s Healthy Homes Program is to reduce preventable household hazards associated with asthma, lead poisoning and physical injuries among children. Program staff conduct in-home assessments to identify and eliminate these hazards. A \$1-million program expansion, funded through the U.S. Department Housing and Urban Development, was developed in 2006, enabling a total of 516 total home assessments to be completed. Health Department staff work with homeowners to eliminate conditions that may lead to asthma, lead poisoning or physical injury. Identified household hazards necessitating home repair are referred to the Department of Development’s Housing Division. In addition, 43 grant-funded in-home educational visits were conducted to help families reduce environmental health risks in their homes.

Awarding Grants to Health Partners

- The Columbus Health Department is supporting community-based organizations to provide outreach and promotion of prevention and control of asthma triggers and other housing-based hazards by awarding grants to those organizations. Two \$6,000 grants were awarded this year. One was awarded to Children’s Hospital for its “Asthma On The Block” program with child care centers and after school programs. The program utilizes puppetry to teach children about asthma and provide referrals to the healthy homes program. The second grant was awarded to the Ohio State University Asthma Center to expand patient asthma education in family practice centers and provide referrals to the healthy homes program.

Education about Healthy Homes

- In 2006, the Columbus Health Department developed and distributed publications on indoor health issues at 40 community events to help all Columbus citizens make their homes healthier. In addition, the program conducted 1,549 phone consultations to address housing-related health concerns.

IMPROVING WATER QUALITY

Big Darby Accord

- The Big Darby Accord is a multi-jurisdictional planning effort designed to protect one of Central Ohio’s most important natural resources, the Big Darby Creek. The Accord included ten jurisdictions, and was finalized in the summer of 2006. The City of Columbus was the first member jurisdiction to adopt the accord. Since that time, jurisdictions representing the vast majority of the land in the planning area have adopted the Accord. The jurisdictions are now moving full speed ahead to implement the plan.

5th Ave Dam Removal

- In order to help restore the health of the Olentangy River, the City is evaluating the removal of the Fifth Ave Dam. Lowhead dams are often an impediment to river health. The City is pursuing funding from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to assist in the project, and the Corps is committed to funding a feasibility study. On August 1, 2006, over 70 stakeholders and watershed residents attended the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Scoping Meeting at

Goodale Park. This initial phase of a feasibility study was to solicit stakeholder and community to examine a variety of alternatives for modification or removal of the 5th Avenue lowhead dam and improve water quality in this stretch of the lower Olentangy River.

Stormwater Drainage Manual

- In 2006, the Department of Public Utilities substantially revised its Stormwater Drainage Manual. The new Manual balances economic development and environmental protection with respect to stormwater management for development and redevelopment projects. The purpose of the manual is to protect existing natural stormwater resources, convey and control stormwater in a safe and responsible manner and meet water quality goals. The Manual moves beyond traditional water quantity controls to include safeguarding water quality through measures such as establishing a Stream Corridor Protection Zone along streams and a stream protection policy that leaves most streams open.

Stormwater innovations

- In partnership with the Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission's Greenways Program the Department of Public Utilities has planted nearly an acre of Ohio **native prairie** at the 910 Dublin Road Utilities Department Complex. The goal of the project is to create natural landscape plots that will enhance biodiversity, decrease water and air pollution, provide an economically viable alternative to traditional turf management, and inform residents about the benefits of natural landscaping.
- On October 11, 2005 thirty-five people representing various City departments learned about the benefits of a **green roof workshop** sponsored by the Department of Public Utilities. After the classroom presentation, workshop participants received a guided tour of AEP's green roof located in downtown Columbus atop their parking garage/maintenance facility. The roof is accessible to employees from their employee cafeteria. Rooftop plants soak up storm water and filter pollutants. By reducing storm water runoff and pollutants, we are protecting our waterways, decreasing the strain on aging infrastructure and maximizing our investment in new infrastructure.

Supporting local watershed groups

- The Department of Public Utilities awarded two contracts for over fifty thousand dollars to two local watershed groups in 2006. The contracts are designed to encourage residential backyard conservation, water and energy conservation and promotes public education to improve watershed health. Friends of Big Walnut Creek and Friends of the Lower Olentangy Watershed will emphasize rainbarrel distribution and rain garden workshops, environmentally sensitive lawn care, stream stewardship and water quality monitoring

Wetlands Protection

- The Columbus Recreation and Parks Department obtained an EPA grant to study 22 wetlands in Franklin County, eleven of which were on Columbus parkland. The study will be published by EPA this spring and will contain information on wetlands' value in reducing flood damage and cleansing water before it enters our waterways. Wetlands also have a high, but often unappreciated, recreation value.
- Recreation and Parks has created a 105 acre **Wetland and Wet Prairie** at the Smith Farms, part of the Three Creeks Metropark. The transformation was accomplished by a grant that the City received from the Natural Resources Conservation Service. The wetland and wet prairie will combat the adverse affects that flooding in the Smith Farms and surrounding areas originally encountered. This project has already had a noticeable impact on local wildlife.
- The Department of Public Utilities invested in a Pilot Wetlands Mitigation Project to mitigate impacts on existing wetlands from the Department's construction projects. Over six acres of herbaceous and wooded wetlands were constructed along Clover Groff Ditch in the

Hellbranch Run Watershed. The pilot wetlands present a great opportunity to provide a much needed wetland habitat within highly urbanized Franklin and is a valuable educational tool for local residents.

Improving Wet Weather Performance

- During certain rain events, the City's sewer system becomes overwhelmed, resulting in sewage backups in basements of private homes, and sewage spills into our local waterways. In the past several years, the City has started to address these significant issues. These efforts include Project Dry Basement, whereby the City will install a back flow prevention device in City homes that have had a sewage backup caused by City sewers. Simultaneously, the City has been strengthening its maintenance operations for its sewers. In addition, the City is implementing an unprecedented capital program to correct the sewer overflows. The first five years of the program were approved by Ohio EPA.

Protecting Stream Corridors

- The City's Department of Public Utilities has been an active participant in Ohio Environmental Protection Agency Water Resource Restoration Sponsorship Program. This program allows the City to borrow additional funds when it is borrowing money for capital improvement projects from the State. The additional funds are used to sponsor a stream corridor protection project, and the City is granted lower interest rates by the State. Through this program the Department has acquired and protected over \$25 million in stream corridor protection. Most recently, the Department has received approval for \$3 million dollars for acquisition along the Big Walnut.

PROMOTING GREEN BUSINESS

Fostering Green Businesses

- **Rastra Ohio, Inc.** is a manufacturer of a revolutionary "green" building material for houses, apartments, commercial and industrial buildings. Rastra removes polystyrene from our landfill and uses this material in the manufacturing of energy efficient concrete panels. Rastra presents a significant private investment - \$3.9 Million investment in real and personal property - and will create 47 new jobs with an annual payroll of \$1.6 Million. The City provided a Job Creation Tax Credit of 65% for a term of 8 years.
- **Heartland Refinery, LLC** has been operating locally since 1948. Heartland Refinery, LLC acquires used petroleum products and recycles them into clean oils that can be used for productive use. Heartland will be [building a new or expanding existing] refinery to recycle oils. This represents a \$10 Million investment in real and personal property, which will create 20 new jobs and retain 11 jobs. The City provided the following incentives: an Enterprise Zone Abatement of 75% for a term of 10 years on real property, and an Enterprise Zone Abatement of 75% for a term of 2 years on personal property.
- **Craft American** is a distributor of Crafts products. They plan to acquire land and build a "green" distribution center. This will represent a \$3.4 Million investment in real and personal property and create 21 new jobs. The City will create an Enterprise Zone Abatement of 75% for a term 10 years on real property, and an Enterprise Zone Abatement of 75% for a term of 3 years on personal property.

Helping Build Green Markets

- The change in the procurement code discussed above includes a 5 percent credit that may be used to hire "environmentally preferable" design firms and construction contracts. The City intends to use this credit to promote and encourage firms that work with the City to adopt green practices in their City contracts.

FOSTERING THE “GREENING” OF COLUMBUS

Building Green Buildings

- The City is seeking **LEED** (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) certification on several new construction projects. Currently, there are two fire stations and one police substation that are in design and will be LEED certified. In addition, the City is rehabilitating an old firehouse into a community health center on the west side. The rehabilitation will be LEED certified.
- In addition, the City is incorporating green components into other projects, such as the new fleet maintenance facility and the Smith Farms Interpretive Center at Three Creek Parks.
- The downtown **Lazarus** department building is being transformed into office space, in the largest LEED certified historic rehabilitation effort in the country. The building includes a green roof, reuse of stormwater, and many recycled construction materials. The stormwater recycling program is particularly innovative, as it will result in zero discharge of stormwater to the City’s combined storm sewer system, will allow the green roof to be irrigated without the use of City water, and will allow much of the building’s gray-water systems (toilets, etc) to be run using stormwater. This will result in almost 2 million gallons of City water being saved. The rehabilitation is almost finished, and some tenants have already moved in.

Affordable Green Homes

- **Greenview Estates** is an affordable housing subdivision that incorporates many important green principles - including energy efficiency, HOME Energy Rating System (HERS) score of 88. This score is 2 points above Energy Star standards. Ground broke on this project in December of 2006, and 28 of the 30 homes are now in contract.
- **BASE Home** - This is an affordable housing project the City is funding through our Housing Development Program. It is a Green Build and a LEED pilot project located on 21st Street. The City is partnering with the Columbus Housing Partnership, Worthington Kilbourne School, Columbus Green Building Forum.
- The City’s Home Safe and Sound program, which provides loans for qualified residents to make needed repairs, is making its rehabilitation standards “green.” These standards now include low emission paints and primers, low flow plumbing fixtures, energy efficient furnaces and Energy Star rated windows, doors, hot water heaters. The City is currently looking into the feasibility and accessibility of including low emission carpeting, sheet goods, floor tile and adhesives.

Trees

- In the 2005 Green Memo, the City committed to planting 20,000 trees in five years. The City is on target to meet that goal.
- The Development Department Planning staff created a **GIS Tree Cover Date Layer** depicting significant clusters of trees for a majority of the city, using 2004 aerial photographs. Future efforts will include completing the task for the city boundaries and consideration of extending the coverage to adjacent areas. This information will be used with data on floodplain, slope, soils, hydrography and wetlands to create an integrated natural resources database for mapping applications.

Whittier Peninsula

- The redevelopment of Whittier Peninsula continues. Substantial environmental assessment work has been completed on the Whittier's southern tier, and consultants retained by the City are in the process of completing a "No Further Action Letter" to Ohio Environmental Protection Agency for the future Grange Insurance Audubon Center site. Audubon officially launched its capital fundraising campaign in November and has raised 8 Million dollars toward its 11.5 Million funding goal.
- Metro Parks started remediation and parkland construction in the northern tier parkland area. As the year closes, visitors to the Peninsula can see newly constructed wetland cells, landscape alterations, and piles of construction debris retained for future reuse as fill or roadway materials. Metro parks has also redesigned the southern boat launch and started constructing fishing and viewing piers. The boat launch should re-open late summer 2007.

Cleaning-up Brownfields

- The City worked with Urban Growth and private investors to obtain a Clean Ohio grant to rehabilitate a former City owned landfill. The remediation was completed and an office building is being built on the site.

Planning for Green Neighborhoods

- While natural resource are considered in many of the city's planning documents, a new template established in 2006 for use in the neighborhood/area planning process strengthens this practice. This template includes a **Natural Resources Element** that will be especially relevant to growing planning areas, as well as important to older, developed areas with limited green space, aging infrastructure and vacant and/or transitional use opportunities. Transportation and mobility sections can be written to emphasize relationships to sustainable development and healthy cities initiatives.

LOOKING FORWARD

The City will be moving full speed ahead in 2007 to continue to make Columbus a greener place. Some of the initiatives we will be working on:

- The City will be working with the other Accord partners to implement the **Big Darby Accord** plan. Work has already begun on implementing coordinated zoning decisions across the jurisdictions, and master planning for the Town Center is one of the next big steps.
- The City, SWACO and the Columbus Public Schools have a plan to dramatically increase **household recycling** in 2007 by placing recycling drop off boxes at every school in Columbus. This will bring free recycling to virtually every neighborhood in Columbus. The goal is to increase the amount of household recycling by 10,000 tons.
- The City intends to adopt a **Green Fleet Policy** in 2007. This policy will provide comprehensive guidance to all City departments about how to wisely invest in better performing vehicles.
- City Hall will be the site of the first **comprehensive energy audit** for the City. This investment grade audit will allow the City The investment-grade audit provides a dynamic model of energy use characteristics of both the existing facility and all energy conservation measures identified. The building model is calibrated against actual utility data to provide a realistic baseline against which to compute operating savings for proposed measures.
- The City also intends to work with its **business community** in several ways. First, we will be developing a Green Business Plan that will provide incentives for green businesses. Second, in conjunction with the Green Team, we will be having a series of workshops to explore whether the City's building or zoning codes create impediments to green buildings. Finally, we intend to encourage our existing business community to participate more in the Get Green effort, by encouraging recycling, energy audits, and green procurement in our community.