2010

A Year in Review

Get Green Columbus

City of Columbus ▪ Michael B. Coleman, Mayor

Dear Friends:

We continue to make significant progress in the greening of Columbus. In 2010 alone we were recognized for our efforts with a variety of awards including: the American Lung Association Clean Vehicle Champion Award, Keep America Beautiful Beautification and Neighborhood Improvement Project Awards, Government Fleet Magazine's Environmental Leadership Award, Leadership Columbus Walk the Talk Award, SWACO Emerald Award and the MORPC Energy & Air Quality Award.

This attention is encouraging and serves as an indicator that we are on the right path. It is clear a healthy environment has many benefits for our individual and collective wellbeing and I am committed to ensuring that Get Green Columbus remains a focus for our city in 2011.

As our city's bicentennial approaches, the significance of sustainability is clear. A commonly quoted definition of sustainability explains the term as meeting our needs without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own. However, I would prefer that our legacy be more than to simply avoid impinging upon future generations. Instead, I hope that through the efforts of Get Green Columbus, we will set an example for vibrant, sustainable communities around the country.

Thank you city employees, community volunteers, GreenSpot members and program funders who contribute to realizing this vision of sustainability every day. I especially want to express my gratitude to the members of my Green Team for their dedication and to the Solid Waste Authority of Central Ohio, for its support of the Environmental Steward's Office.

Sincerely,

Mayor Michael B. Coleman

Existing as a green city is multifaceted, touching the work of every department and encompassing a range of topics. Together with the Mayor's Office of Environmental Stewardship, staff identify and implement projects to reduce impact on the environment through the city's influence. These opportunities range from the obvious, like recycling and planting trees to the obscure, such as revising parking codes and finding a new use for specific waste streams. A sampling of these projects completed in 2010 are shown below. When taken together, our community benefits from these efforts in health, aesthetics, quality of life and more.

Conservation and restoration:

- 124.95 acres of parkland were acquired.
- 3405 native trees, 4570 native shrubs and 13.5 acres of native prairie were planted.
- More than two miles of stream corridor along Big Walnut Creek, Alum Creek and Clover Groff Run were protected and restored.

- Funding was provided to help community gardeners acquire the materials necessary to continue their good work providing local, fresh produce to families and return unused land to beneficial use.
- Mayor Coleman established a community garden for employees at City Hall.
- $6,000,000 of Clean Ohio grant funds were awarded to clean-up the polluted 3M site in Weinland Park and the Kimball Midwest site near Goodale Blvd. in preparation for redevelopment.
- 18.5 acres of invasive honeysuckle and garlic mustard were removed from natural areas.
- 'No mow' areas were established reducing fuel use and air pollutants while increasing wildlife habitat. In 2010, over twenty acres were taken out of the mow cycle.

Reduce, reuse and recycle:

- 32,402.48 tons of yard waste and 19,614.47 tons of recycling were diverted from the landfill (approximately 14.5% of the total waste stream). Additionally, the city recycled 7,006 tons of asphalt into new street projects.
- 6,000,000 gallons of biosolids were reused as a fertilizing application on over 650 acres of farmland and the city continued its ComTil operation, composting biosolids, yard waste, ash and wood chips into a saleable mulch and soil amendment product.

Mayor Coleman announced that in 2012, every single family household in Columbus will receive comprehensive yard waste and recycling collection service without a direct fee. A hauler will be selected in 2011 to implement the program beginning in 2012. With the help of this new service, the city hopes to divert 35% of the waste stream by 2015.

photos:U.S. Air Force photo/Senior Airman Cecilia Rodriguez

Energy:

- Using the Energy Star Portfolio Manager, an interactive management tool created by the U.S. Department of Energy and U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, the city is gathering data on the contribution each of its buildings makes to CO_2 emissions.
- Partnering with MORPC, AEP and OSU, the team received a federal grant from the USEPA to expand the Energy Environment Economy (E3) program to assist 25 additional small to medium scale manufacturers in reducing expenses and environmental impact.
- Continued to ensure the nationally recognized Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) standards are met when constructing city owned buildings. For example, Moody Hall Police Substation and the Police and Parking Violations Impound Lot Building were all built to LEED Silver standards.
- To help encourage private businesses and nonprofit organizations to build green, the Green Columbus Fund was launched. The grant program was developed to incentivize the construction of green buildings and the cleanup of polluted sites.
- O'Shaughnessy reservoir generated 6,500 MWh of clean energy in 2010 preventing 5,300 metric tons of CO_2 from entering the atmosphere.
- 3,698 pedestrian signals began to be replaced with energy efficient LED technology, with an expected annual savings of 1,946,000 kilowatt hours saving the city $163,199 annually in electricity costs and avoiding 1,398 metric tons of CO_2.
- Columbus was selected by the Ohio Department of Development as the Ohio Hub of Innovation for Advance Energy Manufacturing and Storage.

Water:

- In addition to an ongoing rain barrel cost share program, a new partnership with Earth Minded, a subsidiary of Greif, Inc. and Friends of the Lower Olentangy Watershed brought 176 free rain barrels to a neighborhood where rainwater inflow and infiltration during heavy rain has caused sewer capacity problems. Monitoring the impact the barrels have on flow in the sewer lines is being conducted into 2011.
- A 175 square foot green roof was installed at the Dublin Road Water Treatment Plant.
- Work to remove the 5th Avenue dam on the Olentangy River progressed in 2010 with engineering and design work nearly complete. Fundraising will continue into 2011, with anticipated construction beginning in the fall and stream restoration in spring of 2012.
- At each of the city's three drinking water reservoirs, Hoover, O'Shaughnessy, and Griggs, renovations began to treat stormwater runoff from 729 acres of surrounding land. Thirty four bioretention basins and wetlands were created, approximately 18,880 square feet of shoreline was stabilized or protected, parking lots were reduced in size and pulled back from the water's edge and some parking areas were resurfaced with pervious pavers or concrete.
- Adoption of a parking code update reduced excess parking and resulted in better utilization of land, reduced impervious surface and related stormwater runoff.

A 531 KW solar photovoltaic system will be installed on the roof of the city's Fleet Management Facility to provide an estimated 625,000 kwh of electricity in its first year, avoiding 449 metric tons of Co2 equivalent. A separate project will bring solar panels to the roof of the new Scioto Mile Café and public restrooms along the city's downtown riverfront.

Eleven miles of bikeways are planned for installation in 2011 along with a series of secure, bicycle parking locations downtown. As described in the Downtown Master Plan, a recommended bikeway and pedestrian connector bridge will be designed in 2011 to span the Scioto River, connecting the Arena District downtown to the Franklinton neighborhood.

Transportation:

- 22 miles of bike routes and multi-use trails were developed, bringing total mileage to 100.3. Additionally, 29 bicycle racks were installed.
- 100% or 108 of identified eligible city fleet vehicles have been retrofitted with emission controls. Additionally, hydraulic oil and engine heaters (anti-idling retrofits) were installed on all identified vehicles from 2008-2010.
- 24 Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) heavy duty vehicles will be in operation by the end of 2011. The city's first fast-fill CNG fueling station will be constructed at the Fleet Facility on Groves Road. The city is currently in contract for the design of the station and it is expected to be operational by October 2011.
- Design plans were initiated in partnership with SWACO to rebuild the Morse Road solid waste transfer station with a new LEED facility which will bring about numerous environmental improvements including the city's second CNG fueling station.
- The city currently owns approximately 315 flex fuel vehicles. The fuel sites at Fairwood Avenue and 910 Dublin Road are being updated to include the first city-owned E85 fuel dispensers. These sites are expected to have E85 available in early 2011.
- A Plug-in Electric Vehicle (PEV) readiness plan is being prepared to integrate this vehicle type and charging infrastructure into our current transportation system.

Education and Engagement:

- In 2010, community volunteers picked up 235,680 pounds of litter.
- The Mayor's GreenSpot program, created to inspire, educate and recognize those making efforts to get green, increased membership to over 2000 and communicated daily with these members via a new Facebook page. Have you joined yet? www.ColumbusGreenSpot.org

- The existing GreenSpot program will be expanded to a younger audience in 2011 with the development of a children's book, website and resources for elementary school teachers.

City of Columbus
Mayor Michael B. Coleman

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