

FY2012 Strategic Focus Area Plan

“Charlotte will become a national leader in environmental and energy sustainability, preserving our natural resources while balancing growth with sound fiscal policy.”

The City of Charlotte recognizes that environmental stewardship is fundamentally important to quality of life and essential to maintaining a vibrant economy. Protecting our natural resources, promoting conservation, and improving the environment all enhance the City’s mission to preserve the quality of life of its citizens.

Charlotte will become a national leader in environmental sustainability by:

- Promoting and participating in the development of an environmentally sustainable community;
- Leading by example by practicing environmental stewardship in City operations and facilities;
- Seeking and supporting collaborative and regional solutions to environmental problems;
- Facilitating the growth of the clean energy industry, including the alternative energy sector.

As illustrated in the graphic below, the Environmental Focus Area is interrelated to all of City Council’s other focus areas.

Specific initiatives in Economic Development and Transportation Focus Area Plan relate directly to Charlotte’s environmental goals. These FAPs include initiatives for growing jobs in the energy sector, land-use planning, and increased use of transit and other transportation choices.



Environment

Safeguard the Environment

I. ENV. Focus Area Initiative: Promote and participate in the development of a sustainable community

A. FY12 Measure: Increase awareness of the environment as a priority for the community

1. FY12 Target: Explore hosting a sustainability expo/conference and other educational opportunities in conjunction with and funded by other partners.
2. FY12 Target: Increase the exposure of the Power2Charlotte, CurbIt recycling campaign, and other educational/outreach efforts in coordination with other partners.
3. FY12 Target: Implement the nine Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant projects that are catalyst projects or promote energy investments in revitalization areas, and the Neighborhood Energy Challenge.
4. FY12 Target: Collect baseline data on environmental variables in preparation for adding those variables to the biennial Quality of Life study.
5. FY12 Target: Increase access to local foods by: initiating a fresh foods text amendment; encouraging the development of community gardens through Neighborhood Matching Grants program, and collaboration with other partners.

B. FY12 Measure: Make wise decisions regarding growth and development that are consistent with adopted plans and policies (including the GDP-Environment) and minimize negative environmental impacts of land use and development.

1. FY12 Target: 95% of rezoning decisions consistent with adopted area plans and/or staff recommendations
2. FY12 Target: 80% of approved rezonings incorporate environmentally sensitive site design components (Implementation of GDP-Environment)

C. FY12 Measure: Responsibly manage Charlotte's natural resources including the tree canopy, streams, ponds, and wetlands.

1. FY12 Target: Implement the City's Tree Canopy Investment Strategy and measure the effectiveness of the Tree Ordinance and the Tree Planting Programs in meeting the tree canopy goal.

2. FY12 Target: Meet 100% of mitigation requirements through the City's local mitigation bank when streams are negatively impacted by City projects.

D. FY12 Measure: In support of State of North Carolina and City recycling goals, increase single family and multi-family recycling participation.

1. FY12 Target: Achieve a 30% increase in tonnage of recycled materials over FY10 baseline data.

II. ENV Focus Area Initiative: Lead by example by practicing environmental stewardship in City operations and facilities

A. FY12 Measure: Reduce greenhouse gas emissions from City facilities and operations.

1. FY12 Target: Adopt a greenhouse gas action plan by June 2011 and begin implementation in FY2012

2. FY12 Target: Complete seven of the Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant projects designed to improve efficiency of City facilities.
 - B. FY12 Measure: Demonstrate environmental sustainability in the management of the City's vehicle fleet.
 1. FY12 Target: Achieve 4.3 mpg across CATS Bus Operations fleet vehicles, by continuing acquisition of and maximizing the use of fuel efficient and hybrid vehicles, maintaining and monitoring idling practices, continuing to control vehicle speed through governor settings, use of battery power for vehicle maintenance when feasible, and continued use of ultra low sulfur diesel fuel
 2. FY12 Target: Improve the efficiency of the overall City fleet from 2011 levels by purchasing alternative fuel vehicles as funding allows in accordance with the fleet management policy, purchasing smaller vehicles that meet operational requirements, and by seeking grant funding to outfit current vehicles with emissions reducing technology.
 - C. FY12 Measure: Demonstrate environmental sustainability in the design, construction, and operation of City facilities.
 1. FY12 Target: Prepare annual report on the implementation of the Policy for Sustainable Facilities, reporting project decisions, common facility metrics, and recommended policy adjustments
 2. FY12 Target: Per Clean Water Act requirements, develop and begin implementing plans for storm water best practices for priority field operations by June 2012
 3. FY12 Target: 100% compliance with National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System permit requirement for all five wastewater plants
 4. FY12 Target: Divert 70% of materials from Charlotte Douglas Airport's waste stream via a new airport recycling center.
 - D. FY12 Measure: Implement environmentally-conscious practices in the acquisition and disposition of City resources.
 1. FY12 Target: Conduct first year review of the effectiveness of Environmentally Preferable Purchasing Policy by December 2012 and collect baseline info so that specific improvement target may be set in the future.
 - E. FY12 Measure: Identify and advance renewable energy projects leveraging City resources.
 1. FY12 Target: Implement the initial construction of a Combined Heat and Power project at McAlpine Wastewater Management Facility by June 2012.
 2. FY12 Target: Develop and implement a solar energy pilot project on CATS-owned bus canopies by June 2012.
 - F. FY12 Measure: Develop and implement plan to communicate City's environmental successes and other instance of the City of Charlotte "leading by example" (for discussion only)
 1. FY12 Target: TBD

III. ENV Focus Area Initiative: Seek and support collaborative and regional solutions to environmental problems

A. FY12 Measure: Collaborate and participate in public and private sector partnership's environment and visioning initiatives.

1. FY12 Target: Collaborate with City's Energy Partners and other agencies to leverage resources and enhance the impact of cooperative projects.

2. FY12 Target: Identify opportunities to participate in/pursue the development of a coordinated sustainability plan for the community with Charlotte Center City Partners and other partners

B. FY12 Measure: Lead and support efforts to improve Charlotte and regional air quality by promoting long-term reduction in ozone causing emissions.

1. FY12 Target: Implement projects and partnerships with business/management organizations to increase travel by alternative modes to/from/within two mixed-use activity centers by June 2012.

2. FY12 Target: Continue collaboration and participation with COG's CONNECT Regional Air Quality Work Team, the Regional Air Quality Board and Clean Air Works, the Mecklenburg County Division of Air Quality and the State of NC Division of Air Quality to implement strategies to improve air quality.

C. FY12 Measure: Continue a leadership role in regional water resources planning

1. FY12 Target: Utilities staff to continue participation in regional Water Management Group and be actively involved with committee work.

IV. ENV Focus Area Initiative: Facilitate the growth of the clean energy industry, including the alternative energy sector

A. FY12 Measure: Work with partners through the Charlotte Regional Partnership's Energy Capital Project to attract and grow the clean energy industry sectors in Charlotte

1. FY12 Target: Develop a clean energy strategy by January, 2012 with a particular focus on assisting small businesses.

B. FY12 Measure: Improve the regulatory environment by clarifying and enhancing City ordinances that facilitate environmentally and energy sustainable practices.

1. FY12 Target: Initiate alternative energy text amendments to better define and provide guidance for environmental land uses by June 2012.

C. FY12 Measure: Take a leadership role in changes to policy at the state and federal level

1. FY12 Target: Support energy related legislation that would enhance and solidify Charlotte's emergence as an energy center