

City of Madison Sustainability Plan X- Team Recommendations

This sustainability plan is a big step forward in developing an approach that enhances the community's quality of life while seeking to preserve and enhance resources. The environmental and energy goals are similar to recommendations that Public Health has made in the Environmental Report Card. We will continue to serve in our role with data collection and assessment and work closely with others. We look forward to conversations about expanding our involvement as the policies proposed in the sustainability plan are developed and enacted.

Public Health has already been involved in the following areas and would like to be added to the list of partners for these goals:

- Natural Systems Goal 3: Improve Surface Water Quality (page 10)—Public Health already identifies, assesses, and communicates about algal blooms and beach clean-up plans,
- Natural Systems Goal 7: Improve Storm Water Management (page 14)—Public Health already monitors and enforces IDDE (illicit discharge detection and elimination) and has worked on storm water topics such as road salt, and
- Economic Goal 6: Promote Consumption of Local Foods (page 41)—where Public Health has had some success in community gardens and farmer's market initiatives.

There is only one significant concern. Health Goal 7 (page 70) is on access to affordable health care for all residents. While we are very supportive of the goal, it is the domain of the medical system, not public health. Public Health can assist with an assessment to identify unmet needs and help create policies to address those needs, but cannot take the lead. Public Health's resources do not allow it to take on most of the tasks that are listed as actions. Any significant work in increasing access will require active involvement and participation from all local health systems, which are currently grouped in the Dane County Health Council. X-Team recommends that PHMDC be removed from the leadership role for this goal.

The remaining health goals dovetail nicely with the work that Public Health is already planning, although there are a few suggestions for minor changes:

- Extend the time frame with health goals from "short-term" to "short-term and long-term" since work on these goals will require a multi-year effort,
- Reporting done on environmentally impacted diseases should be changed from annually to biannually (Health Goal 2),
- Public Health has been working to address violence, but the issue of domestic violence is something that our staff cannot take on (Health Goal 4),

We look forward to working with the other collaborators on the first six health goals.

Gathering and synthesizing information from so many stakeholders is an enormous undertaking. The suggestions for areas of action are helpful in thinking about how to address each goal. Public Health is pleased to be able to work with others on this plan.

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