Montgomery County Healthy and Sustainable Communities Workshop
June 26, 2008
Universities at Shady Grove, Rockville, MD

Goal and Indicator: Break-Out Session: Draft Notes

Draft Goal: Clean Water: Protect and improve local stream quality and reduce pollution of the Chesapeake Bay. Minimize flooding, pollution, sedimentation and damage to ecology by conserving waterways, wetlands and sensitive parts of stream valleys.
Draft Indicators: Montgomery County's Nitrogen Contribution to the Bay, Percent of Streams Rated Good to Excellent

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Draft Goal: Clean Water: Protect and improve local stream quality and reduce pollution of the Chesapeake Bay. Minimize flooding, pollution, sedimentation and damage to ecology by conserving waterways, wetlands and sensitive parts of stream valleys.

Draft Revision of Goal: Clean Water: Protect and improve county water resources, ecological health, human health and sustainable drinking water by managing the quantity and quality of runoff and recharge and reducing pollutants to the Chesapeake Bay watershed.

Major Theme(s) of Discussion on the Goal:
1. Chosen Working Indicator: Percent of Streams rated "Good to Excellent " in Montgomery County
2. Issues are Complex and More Discussion on both Indicators and Action Strategies is needed

Highlights from the Indictors Discussion:
1. Overall best indicators are Stream Quality Conditions (as measured by the Countywide Stream Protection Strategy (CSPS))
2. Nitrogen as an indicator questionable: Nitrogen is not the only problem in our waterways. Phosphorus and other pollutants matter as well.
3. We need to think about the change we want in a system that is operating on a decade to decade scale
4. Identify sustainable landscapes and their indicators

5. Think beyond just what is 100% impervious (it's not the only issue—e.g. grading/soil compaction effects are also important).
6. Indicators must be understandable/observable, measurable, not expensive, and clearly connect to objective.
7. Indicators should address three aspects:
    a) Physical (i.e. run-off, stream stability, sediment)
    b) Biological (i.e. stream biota, decomposing matter)
    c) Chemical (i.e. Nutrients, Dissolved Oxygen, other pollutants)
8. We should focus on primary indicators, but keep secondary ones in view:
    a) Primary indicators = "what is in the water?"
    b) Second indicators = "nature of the environment"
9. We need to find/develop a land-related indicator of health
10. Possible Data Source: County will be establishing stations at County boundaries to monitor what is leaving the County (Continuous Stream Discharge Volume, Nutrients, Sediment, Bacteria)

Other Potential Indicators Discussed:

1. Runoff Volume
2. Actual IBI Scores
3. Water Body Impairments/TMDLs as designated by the State

The Story Behind the Trends:

Key Factors That Positively Influence the Trends

1. Effective storm water management practices/Environmental Site Design/Retrofits
2. Putting Development in the Right Places (Smart Growth, Redevelopment, Limiting Sprawl
3. More Rigorous National/State/Local Standards
4. Increasing Public Awareness/Education/Behavior Modification

Key Factors That Negatively Influence the Trends

1. Imperviousness and other development-altered surfaces that result in lost or decreased infiltration and treatment capacity
2. Development Patterns: Policies and Practices
3. Forest Loss through poor riparian buffers
4. Poor Agricultural Practices

What Will Work to Make a Measurable Difference?

Priority Factor #1: Reduce imperviousness and other development-altered surfaces that result in lost or decreased infiltration and treatment capacity

Potential Strategies/Actions:

- Create clear county policies and guidelines to achieve clean water goals.

- Create Better Development practices, standards, and regulations, and streamline the development review process to better manage the environment and achieve clean water goals
- Provide support , resources, and education for citizens, the media, and the agricultural and development communities

Priority Factor #2: Development Patterns: Policies and Practices

Potential Strategies/Actions:

- Create clear county policies and guidelines to achieve clean water goals.
- Put Development in the Right Places (Smart Growth, Redevelopment, Limiting Sprawl)
- Create Better Development practices, standards, and regulations, and streamline the development review process to better manage the environment and achieve clean water goals
- Provide support , resources, and education for citizens, the media, and the agricultural and development communities

Priority Factor #3: Combat Forest Loss and Protect Riparian Buffers

Potential Strategies/Actions:

- Increase forest area, forested stream buffers, and urban tree canopy cover
- Create clear county policies and guidelines to achieve clean water goals.
- Put Development in the Right Places (Smart Growth, Redevelopment, Limiting Sprawl)
- Create Better Development practices, standards, and regulations, and streamline the development review process to better manage the environment and achieve clean water goals

Priority Factor #4: Influence Agricultural Practices at Policy and Practice Levels

Potential Strategies/Actions:

- Create clear county policies and guidelines to achieve clean water goals.
- Provide support, resources, and education for citizens, the media, and the agricultural and development communities

Key Partners and Policy/Strategy Options:

Possible in Above Strategies Partners:

- Government Officials – elected, policy makers, planners
- Governmental Agencies – local, regional, state, federal
- Stakeholders – Citizens, Community/Civic Groups, Agricultural Community, Developers, Development Consultants, Non-Profit Organizations
- Academic/Research
- Faith-based Organizations

- Development/ Small builders (large and Small)
- Financial Community, Chambers of Commerce
- NGOs

Draft "Three Best Policy/Strategy Options"

- Create Clear County Policies and Guidelines to Achieve Clean Water Goals
- Create Better Development Practices, Standards, and Regulations, and Streamline the Development Review Process to Better Manage the Environment and Achieve Clean Water Goals
- Provide Support, Resources, and Education for Citizens, the Media, and the Agricultural and Development Communities