



February 2011

PlantGreen: The Environmental Sustainability Plan for Oak Park & River Forest

PLAN OVERVIEW

Prepared for:

OAK PARK RIVER FOREST

COMMUNITY
works

Prepared by:

 Delta

 Seven
Generations
Ahead

WHO WE ARE

PlanItGreen is a locally funded, stakeholder-driven collaborative effort to create a comprehensive action plan for environmental sustainability in Oak Park and River Forest.



WHAT WE'RE DOING

After a year of gathering data and input, we drafted a plan that outlines goals and strategies to achieve environmental sustainability. Now, obtaining stakeholder commitments is key.

WHAT YOU WILL READ INSIDE

Nine Target Areas



1: EDUCATION

In addition to incorporating education strategies across the plan, this area focuses on schools and curriculum (K-University) and general community education.



2: ENERGY

The consensus is that OPRF should first reduce consumption through energy efficiency strategies and then encourage the use of renewable energy where possible.



3: WASTE

Residential recycling is already strong, but there is room for improving multi-family and commercial recycling as well as food composting and construction debris reuse.



4: WATER

Strategies focused mainly on stormwater management as well as water conservation and water quality issues.

WHY YOU SHOULD CARE

A strong and well-supported plan can help create and maintain a vibrant, healthy community now and into the future. Your input can shape that future today.



WHAT'S NEXT?

The draft plan must be vetted by people like you to ensure it embodies what you believe we need to keep our community strong. Your endorsement will help convince the key institutions that govern our residents, represent our businesses, and educate our community to commit to the plan. By taking on specific responsibilities with targets and timelines, these committed stakeholders will transform the plan into a reality — good for the environment, good for the economy, and good for people like you. It's your community. Make it a good one.



5: COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Strategies focus on developing clear and consistent sustainable development criteria, updating local codes, and educating practitioners.



6: TRANSPORTATION

Public transit must be easy, inexpensive, safe, and popular. Biking infrastructure should expand. And public perception of biking, walking, and taking public transit could be improved.



7: GREEN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Our strategies help businesses capture the benefits of the 'green economy' while reducing our environmental footprint.



8: OPEN SPACE & ECOSYSTEM PRESERVATION

Our plan focuses on incorporating green infrastructure into existing and emerging spaces that enhance nature's services.



9: FOOD

While the communities have a strong base of local, sustainable food options, institutional procurement remains a big challenge.

9 Target Areas

6 ACTORS



EDUCATION



ENERGY



WASTE



WATER



BUSINESS

- Support local businesses that demonstrate the economic value of green strategies
- Participate in sustainability events

- Aggregate purchasing power
- Encourage voluntary certifications
- Support energy-related businesses
- Increase energy efficiency

- Seek funding to jumpstart a commercial composting initiative
- Brand PlanItGreen for participants
- Host zero-waste events

- Educate residents
- Create Water Conservation Certificates



GOVERNMENT

- Implement farm-to-school program
- Promote walk/biking
- Produce sustainability curriculum guide
- Train event producers on sustainability
- Highlight model green practices

- Educate public
- Incentivize renewables
- Update codes
- Aggregate purchasing power
- Add energy to real estate listings
- Encourage certifications

- Require recycling at multi-family units
- Require recycling near "landfill cans"
- Require contractors to divert debris
- Pilot composting
- Implement zero-waste schools

- Educate residents
- Create Water Conservation Certificates
- Conserve water
- Promote alt. laws
- Improve water bill info
- Showcase technologies
- Modify codes



HOUSEHOLD

- Identify sustainable education opportunities
- Participate in sustainable events

- Aggregate purchasing power
- Encourage voluntary certifications
- Support energy-related businesses

- Require recycling at multi-family units
- Educate landlords
- Encourage backyard composting & pilot residential program
- Brand PlanItGreen for participants

- Educate residents
- Create Water Conservation Certificates
- Promote alternative laws
- Improve water bill info



INSTITUTION

- Implement farm-to-school program
- Promote walk/biking
- Produce sustainability curriculum guide
- Train and provide resources to educators
- Develop sustainability campaign

- Increase energy efficiency
- Support energy-related businesses
- Encourage certifications

- Brand PlanItGreen for participants
- Develop and implement comprehensive strategies for meeting landfill diversion targets

- Educate residents



COMMUNITY

- Implement farm-to-school program
- Conduct zero-waste activities
- Promote walk/biking
- Produce sustainability curriculum guide

- Increase energy efficiency
- Support energy-related businesses
- Encourage certifications

- Develop Building Material Reuse Center
- Brand PlanItGreen for participants
- Meet landfill diversion targets
- Host zero-waste events

- Educate residents
- Reduce water use



STUDENT

- Implement farm-to-school program
- Conduct zero-waste activities
- Promote walking and biking to school
- Produce sustainability curriculum guide

- Increase energy efficiency
- Learn about conserving energy

- Implement Zero Waste Schools Program
- Recycle and reduce waste

- Educate students
- Reduce water use



COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT



TRANSPORTATION



GREEN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT



OPEN SPACE & ECOSYSTEM PRESERVATION



FOOD

- Create sustainability criteria

- Create biking facility
- Offer incentives
- Make public transit "cool"
- Develop micro-transit solutions
- Research electric car infrastructure
- Increase car sharing

- Define "green"
- Establish green biz certification, association, and buying co-op
- Publicize green biz
- Develop financing tools
- Establish green biz districts

- Build green infrastructure
- Create green procurement policies

- Develop a "green seal" certification for restaurants

- Assess geothermal
- Educate developers & contractors
- Balance parking with dense development
- Expedite permitting
- Create sustainability criteria

- Implement Bike Plan
- Provide bus/transit shelters
- Make public transit "cool"
- Establish "pay as you pollute" vehicle stickers
- Increase car sharing

- Establish green business certification
- Expedite Village permitting for green biz
- Dedicate parking for green biz
- Develop financing
- Establish green biz districts

- Build infrastructure
- Green procurement
- Assess tree cover
- Connect open spaces
- Develop best practices
- Enhance urban forests
- Develop native plant corridors

- Support school gardens
- Design & implement healthy soil project
- Change school food
- Incorporate healthy eating & farm-to-school curriculum

- Create sustainability criteria

- Make public transit "cool"
- Provide alternatives to "short trips"
- Increase promotion of car sharing

- Purchase green products
- Learn about green products and services

- Build infrastructure
- Enhance urban forests
- Train people to build raised beds

- Provide educational programming

- Incorporate alternative transit into Drivers Ed
- Educate bike riders
- Offer transit incentives
- Make public transit "cool"
- Use "walk to school" program

- Purchase green products
- Learn about green products and services

- Build infrastructure
- Green procurement
- Create ecosystem policies
- Model green practices

- Build an educational garden at Dominican University
- Increase healthy, local, sustainable food access for Dominican University
- Develop Dominican University courses

- Create sustainability criteria

- Educate bike riders
- Make public transit "cool"

- Purchase green products
- Learn about green products and services

- Build green infrastructure
- Train people to build raised beds
- Broaden information access

- Assess barriers & develop pilot project for local, sustainable food
- Support school gardens
- Provide education
- Design & implement healthy soil project
- Build a central hub

- Make public transit "cool"
- Educate bike riders
- Develop "walk to school" program

- Learn about green products and services

- Build green infrastructure

- Support school gardens
- Change pricing and thought structure around school food
- Incorporate healthy eating and farm-to-school curriculum

HOW YOU CAN GET INVOLVED

1 - Read the Plan

You can access it easily online.

2 - Comment on the Plan

After reading the draft plan, you can submit comments through an online survey.

3 - Commit to a Strategy

The plan will only become a reality if the residents, business owners and leaders in Oak Park and River Forest make commitments to help. You can register your commitment publicly through our website.

4 - Attend a Meeting

OPRFers can meet with representatives from the Delta Institute, Seven Generations Ahead and others at town-hall-style meetings designed to further vet the plan and gather commitments to the plan. A schedule is available online.

**[www.sevengenerationsahead.org/
index.php/programs/planitgreen/](http://www.sevengenerationsahead.org/index.php/programs/planitgreen/)**