
Communications & Engagement

Northeast Ohio Sustainable
Communities Consortium

1/30/2012



Communications and Engagement Plan Table of Contents

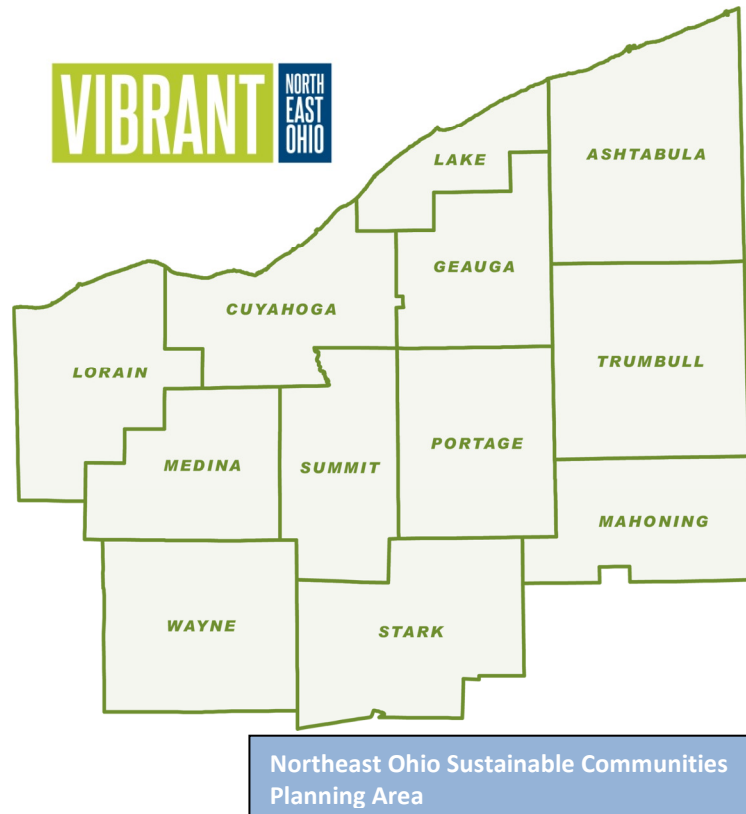
The Northeast Ohio Sustainable Communities Consortium (NEOSCC) Communications and Engagement plan combines a marketing/communication plan with its engagement plan into a single toolkit. The Vibrant Northeast Ohio's tools and methods will feature message continuity and celebrate truly two-way communication throughout region.

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I. Overview of NEOSCC Initiative

The Northeast Ohio Sustainable Communities Regional Planning Process is a three-year planning program funded largely by a highly competitive, first of its kind, \$4.25M federal grant from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) as part of the new federal Sustainable Communities Initiative. The Sustainable Communities Initiative is an interagency collaboration among HUD, the U.S. Department of Transportation, and the U.S. Environmental Protection.

The Northeast Ohio Sustainable Communities Consortium, Inc. [the “Consortium”] is an organization of 31 public and private entities convened to develop a regional plan and develop the collaborative capacity for action for a 12-county region in Northeast Ohio (see map for the initiative’s geographic reach). The Consortium also received a matching grant of \$0.5M from the Fund for our Economic Future, itself a consortium of Northeast Ohio foundations. Consortium members have pledged a further \$2.2M of in-kind match in the form of staff time and operating expense contributions.



The Consortium will be expanding its membership throughout the three-year grant period. The current membership includes the following organizations:

- Akron Metropolitan Area Transportation Study (AMATS)
- Akron Metropolitan Housing Authority
- Akron Urban League
- Ashtabula County
- Catholic Charities, Diocese of Youngstown
- City of Akron
- City of Cleveland
- City of Elyria
- City of Youngstown
- Cleveland Metroparks
- Cleveland Museum of Natural History
- Cleveland State University
- Cuyahoga County
- Cuyahoga Metropolitan Housing Authority
- Eastgate Regional Council of Governments (Eastgate)
- Fund for Our Economic Future

- Greater Cleveland RTA
- Lorain County Growth Partnership
- Mahoning County
- Northeast Ohio Areawide Coordinating Agency (NOACA) (Fiscal Agent)
- Northeast Ohio Community Development Alliance
- Northeast Ohio Four County Regional Planning & Development Organization (NEFCO)
- Policy Bridge
- Regional Prosperity Initiative
- Stark County
- Stark County Regional Planning Commission
- Stark County Area Transportation Study (RPC/SCATS)
- Summit County
- Summit County Health District
- Trumbull County
- Youngstown State University

Coming together to create a Vibrant Northeast Ohio: The **Northeast Ohio Sustainable Communities Consortium** (NEOSCC) will advance a quality, connected 12-county region amidst today's economic climate and stretched resources. Through a diverse group of member organizations and region-wide engagement, the NEOSCC will develop concrete plans while producing collaborative capacity for action. The aim of all of these efforts is to create a vibrant and resilient Northeast Ohio that increases our quality of life, connects our communities, welcomes diversity, restores and protects our natural resources, and creates a competitive economic framework for the vitality of our region.

The Northeast Ohio Sustainable Communities initiative will be a regional policy plan that addresses issues of long-term sustainability of communities and the greater Northeast Ohio region by establishing priorities, policies and tools for land use, housing, transportation, economic development and environmental protection in Northeast Ohio. The plan will address the long-range future of the region and identify trends and patterns which, left unchanged, may impede the region's ability to become economically, demographically and environmentally sustainable. The NEOSCC intends to develop, analyze and evaluate two or more alternative scenarios beyond the "Do Nothing Alternative," an alternative that assumes that present day trends and conditions continue unchecked.

NEOSCC will address issues of regional collaboration and competitiveness and to recommend a broad range of strategies that will make Northeast Ohio more competitive, equitable, and sustainable—economically, environmentally and socially. As critical as the resulting strategies, the NEOSCC will create a "common ground" for collaboration among its member organizations. The shared commitment to working together developed by the Board will support the implementation of the proposed strategies and result in a new environment of cooperation well beyond the funded program schedule. A critical component of the NEOSCC's work is the engagement of stakeholders throughout Northeast Ohio in the planning process to ensure an empowered and engaged region.

Work Streams

The NEOSCC has developed a series of Work Streams in order to more fully gauge the economic, demographic and environmental consequences of current patterns of development in the region. These subject matter areas will be utilized to test the likely impacts of plausible alternative development patterns on the long-term health and sustainability of the region's communities.

The Work Stream personnel consist of Consortium members, stakeholders and other subject matter experts from throughout Northeast Ohio. Throughout the process, the collaboration between the Work Streams will be critical in examining the region's opportunities and challenges. The Work Streams are as follows:



Strong Economic Base:

The Economic Development Workstream is focused on three primary tasks: First, understanding the economic trends for NE Ohio both as a region and as subareas (with a concentration on target industries that contribute to economic growth in the future and areas where industry clusters exist); Second, along with the other workstreams, identifying those development principles that will contribute to a sustainable economy in the region, and third, development of specific policies and practices that can be utilized by business, government and philanthropic stakeholders to support long-term sustainable economic growth in the region. The ED Committee of NEOSCC is comprised of economic development policymakers and practitioners from a wide range of interests, including business, local government, finance, development corporations, and education.

Environments Work Stream will deliver an actionable plan of policy recommendations for the protection of resources of significance in Northeast Ohio’s natural environment. The plan will integrate existing plans for air quality, water quality, water and sewer infrastructure, parks and recreation, and energy/natural resources at all levels of government (federal, state, county, municipal) with actionable policy recommendations toward implementation of those plans. The plan will identify connections between environment, transportation and land use strategies with achievable outcomes: reduce availability of currently undeveloped land for development while simultaneously facilitating compact, infill, mixed-use, walkable development; increase access of low-income and minority populations to parks, trails, recreational amenities, and fresh, local foods; and remediate environmental degradation and mitigate negative environmental impacts through facility siting.

Housing and Communities will recommend priorities, policies and practices that will improve regional housing equity, access and quality, including energy-efficient choices. In addition, the work stream will value communities and neighborhoods by promoting a healthy, safe, and walkable NEO region - rural, urban, and suburban. The Housing & Communities Work Stream is comprised of representatives from every public housing authority and fair housing agency within the NEO region. Additional members have an interest/expertise in housing, community development or public health.

Connections: The Connections work stream was created to guide development of goals and policies for future infrastructure investment that balance the needs of all transportation system users in the region. It will seek to find ways to optimize access to different modes of transportation to connect people to jobs and destinations, move goods and freight, and lower costs for users while reducing environmental impacts.

Quality Connected Places : The Quality Connected Places Work Stream is focused on supporting the region’s existing communities by identifying, linking and leveraging their unique assets and by recommending changes to laws, policies and procedures that limit Northeast Ohio’s ability to compete as a “quality connected region.” The Work Stream will integrate the output of the other four Work Streams; conduct “scenario planning” to identify and evaluate alternative long-term (20-30 year) development patterns and their impact on the region’s existing communities and environments, both built and natural; and direct the production of the final Regional Plan. The QCP Committee of the NEOSCC is comprised of representatives of the program’s other Work Streams as well as policymakers and practitioners from the fields of community planning, law and public policy, urban design and development.

Engagement and the Work Streams

The communications and engagement strategy is supporting both the overall initiative as well as the individual work streams. It is important that engagement activities provide the push and pull for issues at the Consortium level and within each Work Stream. Communication and Engagement activities are being planned to have on-going dialogue to better understand Board Members, Stakeholders, the Public and other external audiences’ preferences and priorities.

II. VibrantNortheast Ohio

While the Northeast Ohio Sustainable Communities Consortium name can serve as an anchor for the organization, it was decided that a more dynamic identity be developed for the overall messaging of the initiative. This identity should speak to the scale of the initiative but also create energy around its outcomes.



What is VibrantNortheastOhio?

vi-brant [vahy-bruh nt] *adjective*: Energetic, bright or full of life and excitement.

In the selection of “Vibrant” and “Northeast Ohio,” there is hope that stakeholders and the public relate the initiative not to planning milestones or the planning process. Instead the message can focus on the outcome of the NEOSCC’s collaborative work together.

Ways to talk about VibrantNortheastOhio

Aspirational

Taking this opportunity to better plan and develop collaborative capacity, the initiative will increase the quality of life and long-term vitality of our region. The initiative would create a Northeast Ohio that is at once resilient, competitive and accessible to current and potential residents and businesses.

Tactical

In the present economic climate and with the current level of resources, this is a critical opportunity for our region to come together to enhance the strength of our regional assets and collaborate on shared issues and challenges.

Process

The plan development and collaborative capacity building will occur over the next two years by examining what we currently have in the region, what we would like and how to get it. The areas of focus include: Community Focused Economic Development, Environment, Housing and Neighborhoods, Connections (Transportation) and how all of these create Quality Connected Places.

Engagement

We would like to invite all of Northeast Ohio to be an integral part of the Vibrant Northeast Ohio initiative. The 12-county planning footprint contains diverse geographical, cultural, demographic and commercial stakeholders that constitute Northeast Ohio’s unique strengths. It is in bringing this diversity together to design a vision in which they are vested, that a shared commitment can lead to action. The engagement process will solidify existing and cultivate new networks throughout the region to have a lasting impact on Northeast Ohio.

III. Purpose and Goals for Communications and Engagement

A critical component of the Consortium's work, if not the most critical, is the engagement of stakeholders throughout Northeast Ohio in the planning process. The 12-county planning footprint contains diverse geographical, cultural, demographic and commercial stakeholders that constitute Northeast Ohio's unique strengths. It is in bringing this diversity together to design a vision in which they are vested, that a plan and shared commitment can lead to action.

Inclusive: This is a plan for the entire region from the rural counties to the suburbs to the urban core.

Critical Window: In the present economic climate and with the current level of resources, this is a critical opportunity for our region to come together to enhance the strength of our regional assets and collaborate on shared issues and challenges.

Place making: Fostering opportunities for learning and sharing through dialogue and exchange, all stakeholders in Northeast Ohio will build a stronger comprehension of our regional strengths and connect these competitive advantages into a stronger sense of place.

Shared Vision and Empowerment: The collaborative nature of the planning process at all levels of engagement will create a shared vision of the entire region. Building relationships and valued exchange will be paramount so stakeholders (at all levels) are invested in the solutions and empowered to ACT.

Building on Past Successes: The initiative will build on past success such as Voices & Choices, on a regional engagement level that set the stage for the Advance Northeast Ohio agenda that has guided economic development work, as well as other initiatives such as Youngstown 2010, Sustainable Cleveland 2019, Regional Prosperity Initiative, EfficientGov.org, The Oberlin Project and 2025 Imagine Akron., etc.

Vibrant Northeast Ohio will highlight established and on-going initiatives that need nurtured and continued. Many of these initiatives are key "hubs/nodes" of interested people who can help shape the vision and plan.

Goals:

In striving to create a shared vision for the NEOSCC planning efforts, the following goals have been set for communications and engagement activities:

- **CREATE AN UNDERSTANDING OF FELLOW CONSORTIUM MEMBER ORGANIZATIONS ACROSS THE BOARD AND A PROCESS THAT PROVIDES MEMBERS A WAY TO COLLABORATE ON ISSUES, PRIORITIZE OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES, AND MAKE DECISIONS TOGETHER;**
- **CREATE AN UNDERSTANDING OF REGIONAL AND LOCAL ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES;**
- **ENGAGE THE BOARD, STAKEHOLDERS AND PUBLIC IN A DIALOGUE THAT DEVELOPS COMMON GROUND FOR COLLABORATION AND ACTION;**
- **DEVELOP DYNAMIC AND ON-GOING RELATIONSHIPS, BOTH EXISTING AND NEW;**
- **IMPLEMENT AND MODEL AN ENGAGEMENT PLATFORM THAT IS BOTH VIBRANT AND ENDURING;**
- **REACH AS MANY INDIVIDUALS AND ORGANIZATIONS THROUGHOUT THE 12 COUNTIES TO ENGAGE AND ACT. PAYING PARTICULAR ATTENTION TO THE FOLLOWING GROUPS:**
 - **THOSE TYPICALLY UNDERSERVED OR UNREPRESENTED IN THE PLANNING PROCESS- WORKING WITH THE MARGINALIZED WHILE ACCOMMODATING LIMITED ENGLISH SPEAKERS, PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES AND THE AGING**
 - **THOSE WHO HISTORICALLY HAVE NOT FOUND VALUE IN PREVIOUS PLANNING ACTIVITIES**
 - **THOSE WHO DISMISS THIS EFFORT FOR OTHER REASONS**

IV. Challenges



WHAT DOES IT ALL MEAN?

With many definitions of sustainability and instant biases around the term (and other “green” vocabulary as well as “regionalism,” “collaboration,”) the NEOSCC is presented with a great creative challenge. But perhaps more than a challenge it is an opportunity to develop how these principles can benefit everyone within the region.

The NEOSCC will collaborate on the further development of a value proposition for sustainability and collaboration within our region. The first priority in the messaging will be

to outline the context of the current environment and then focus on the potential results of the initiative. More in-depth messaging on sustainability will be developed as the project proceeds. A key message to everyone in the second year should be why and how a sustainable approach is different. The NEOSCC will utilize clear, simple examples of a traditional approach to an issue and details of how a sustainability decision-making framework would be different.

COMING TOGETHER... FOR WHAT?

For many residents, stakeholders, organizations and governments, the initiative will represent another civic endeavor that will either not reach them or be another gathering of the same folks rehashing the same things with the same results. There are also areas of Northeast Ohio that will question whether they will have a say and if their input will be heard and be part of the solution. Another whole set will react with “engagement fatigue” due to the number of participatory initiatives over the last decade throughout the region. These initiatives have achieved different levels of success in launching action and building confidence in the wide scale collaboration. The Communications and Engagement Committee has discussed these challenges and has prioritized meeting these obstacles through new methods and a greater emphasis on inclusion. The engagement efforts will be broadened beyond conventional format to be imaginative and dynamic in creating common ground.



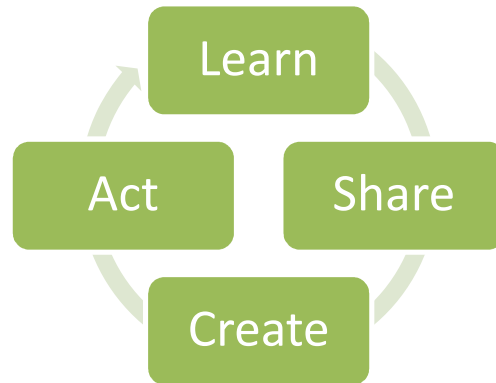
City of Portland | 1200 OR Ave. Suite 1200 | Portland, OR 97201

WE DO. A city is only as good as its last plan. And our last one brought to life some of the very things we admire most about our city. It laid the groundwork for one of the best transportation infrastructures in the country and enabled us to develop a vibrant central city. That was 1980. And almost 50% of us weren't even here then.

TIME FOR A NEW PLAN. Today we face many new challenges. Only 63% of our students graduate on time. 45% of our electricity comes from coal. Our unemployment rate tops 11%. And there's the human toll – a growing gap between the haves and have-nots. We want to share opportunities equitably among our city's increasingly diverse population. But rather than just present a plan for all to follow, we'd like to have a lively discussion with you about it.

From Portland, Oregon's Portland Plan Handbook...
<http://www.portlandonline.com/portlandplan/>

V. Principles for Communication and Engagement



In order to meet its goal of “Engage in a Dialogue that leads to action,” the NEOSCC Communications and Engagement Committee identified four key elements of its engagement process to ensure a more meaningful participatory experience: Learning, Sharing, Creating and Acting. These elements are seen as critical to all engagement activities and will be organic in the processes.

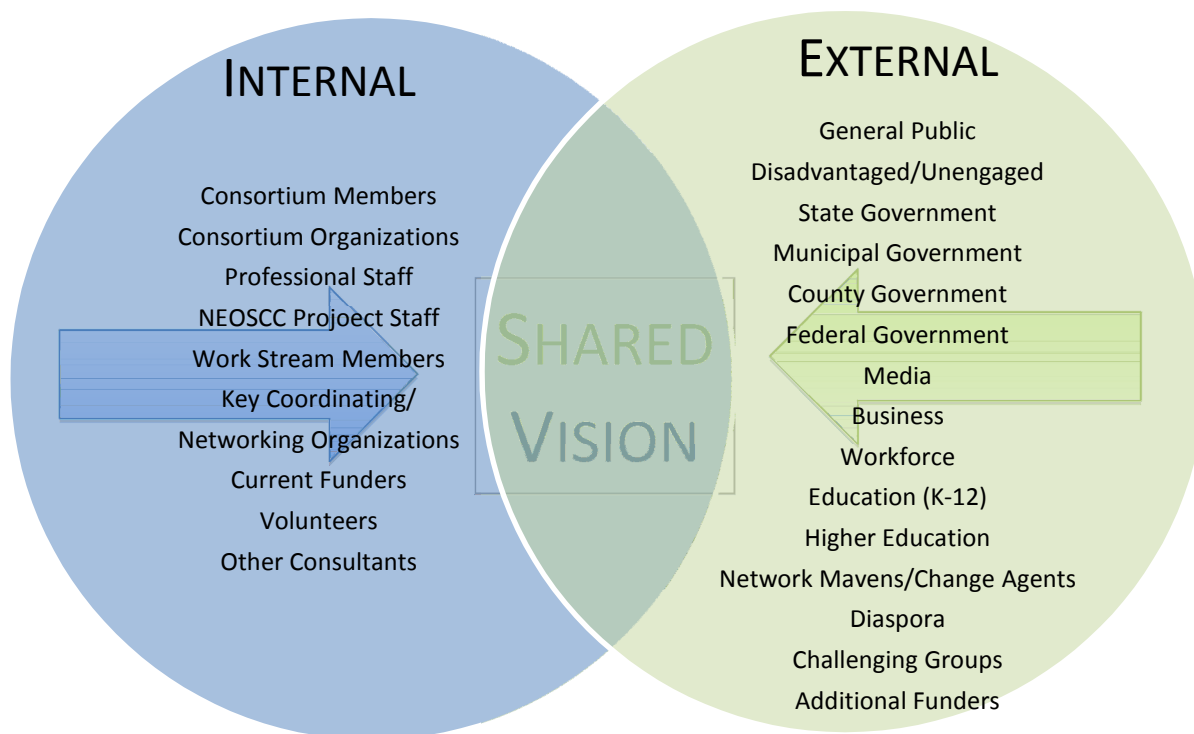
The following are other key principles of the NEOSCC engagement efforts:

BACK AND FORTH	A dialogue will be created and a timely follow-up loop will be documented and celebrated. This is critical in creating a shared vision and vested interest.
EVERY VOTE COUNTS	Ensure that contributions influence decision making
SEE-THROUGH	Be transparent, genuine and support the mission of the NEOSCC
SEEING IS BELIEVING	Throughout the engagement process, visualization techniques will be used to gather opinion, clarify, and build consensus
MAKE IT WORK	Engagement will be flexible and use creative approaches. It will also be tailored to reach diverse audiences
A SEAT AT THE TABLE	Embrace and respect difference of opinion and the challenging viewpoints
EVERY WHICH WAY	Develop opportunities for participants to understand and engage each other

MAKE IT FUN	This should be an energetic process that attracts interest and participation
EARLY AND OFTEN	Encourage early and active participation
NO PERMISSION NEEDED	Nurture leadership and a high level of involvement
MEASURING UP	Implement evaluation and measurement tools to ensure effectiveness

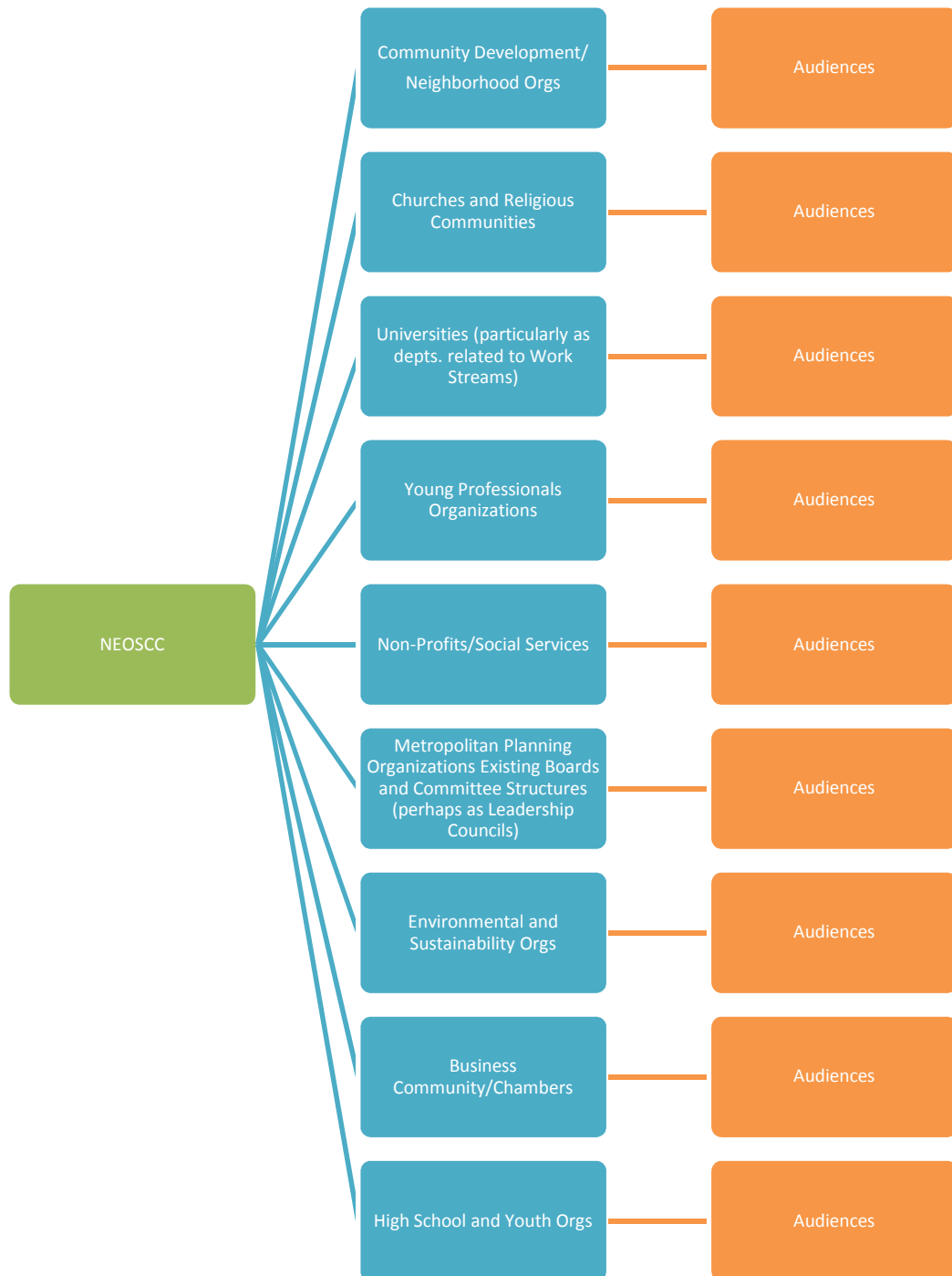
VI. Audiences

Building upon previous engagement efforts in the Northeast Ohio region, the Communications and Engagement Committee has identified the audience groupings into two categories: internal and external. Utilizing the framework of learning, sharing, creating and acting, it is the collaborative opportunity between these audiences that will enable all stakeholders to design a vision in which they are vested and create a shared commitment that can lead to action.



In the third and fourth quarters of 2012, the Communications and Engagement Committee will work with the selected engagement and communications consultant(s) to more definitively define these audiences and the networks that are need to reach these groups.

The Vibrant Northeast Ohio Network: In order to further the development of an enduring engagement platform, the networks and tools identified during the engagement process will be documented and published to the community at the end of the project



VII. On-Going Communication and Engagement

Board Meetings

The NEOSCC monthly board meetings provide engagement opportunities for both internal and external audiences. While the meetings do contain aspects of business and governance, in September 2011, an effort was made to incorporate a more engaging approach to the meetings. Highlighted in this approach is a new section entitled Understanding and Context. The new section promotes greater understanding of the Board Membership (NEOSCC 101 Series – What is an MPO?) across the Consortium as well as outlining the context of issues in which the initiative is taking place (recent discussions on Fracking and Community Solutions NEORIO indicators). The presentations are structured to foster dialogue among the Board Members hopefully establishing a comfort level across the Board to discuss the initiative issues moving forward. All NEOSCC Board meetings are open to the public. The Public Comment section of the agenda is actually placed at the beginning of the meeting to allow for comment early on in the meeting.



12Counties|12Months

In April 2012, NEOSCC Board Members will be travelling to each county in the planning region, as the Board Meetings will host a “12 Counties in 12 Months” program. The hosts of each “12 Counties in 12 Months” meeting will be asked to introduce their home county, what they are the most proud (a company, a festival, a park, a project, etc.) and issues related to the economy, environment, community and relevance to the Work Streams.

The Communications and Engagement Committee will work with the selected consultant(s) and Consortium Members to develop the engagement agenda for each County’s meeting.

Board meetings dates and times are published on the NEOSCC Website along with other networking websites throughout the region. Beginning in 2012, all board meetings will be videotaped and posted to the NEOSCC website.

Metro Area Work Shops

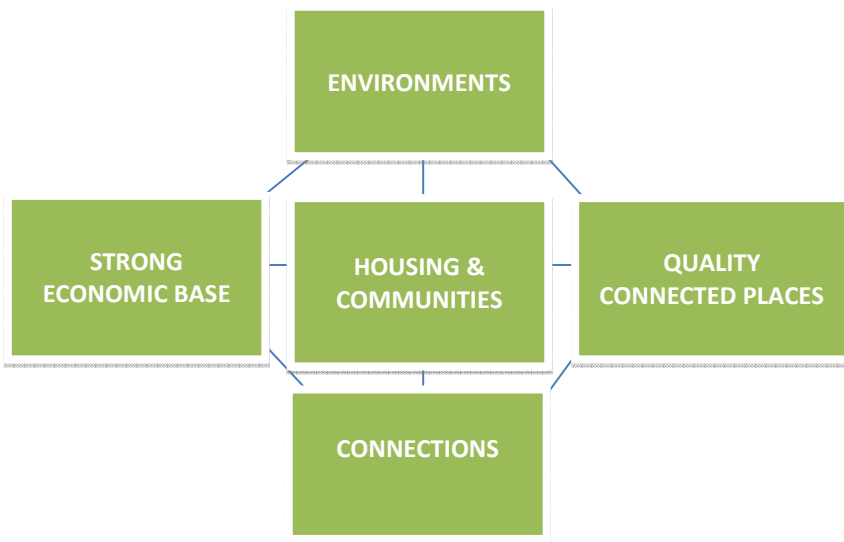
Metropolitan Planning Organizations-based Metroarea Workshops targeting local government will provide the opportunity for local officials to participate in offering input and setting priorities. The region’s MPOs will each host four Metroarea Workshops targeting local government officials. These Workshops will provide the opportunity for local officials to participate in offering input and setting priorities. In collaboration with the selected consultant(s), Project Management Office and MPO’s, the Communications and Engagement Committee will schedule and set the agenda for the four meetings.

Work Stream Meetings

The five work streams meet monthly with their work stream membership. These committees are cross-pollinated with individuals from different disciplines to leaven their points of view and enliven their discussions. Through such discussions, the committees consider the social equity impact, economic impact, and environmental impact of their findings and recommendations. Both MetroFuture Boston and the Baltimore Office of Sustainability Planning Grant included citizen participants in their Work Groups.

As of the writing of this plan, there are numerous options under discussion for how volunteers may get involved with the Work Streams:

- A.) Open Work Stream membership to any interested parties;
- B.) Open Work Stream membership to any professional within the Consortium planning process
- C.) Open Work Stream meeting attendance to interested parties through an aggressive public announcement campaign;
- D.) Develop a Citizens and/or Professionals subcommittee for each WS with open membership that offers direct input through the Co-Chairs and Project Managers;
- E.) Task Volunteer-led groups to lead sessions during the larger scale public meetings; and
- F.) Work with WS Committees to define subject matter areas that can be public-led.



Work Stream progress will be communicated monthly to the Consortium Board (at Board Meetings), Work Stream Committees and through newsletters and social media tools to the general public. Significant milestone meetings will be video recorded and posted on neoscc.org.

Social Media

During the course of the initiative, a variety of social media tools (Twitter, LinkedIn, Facebook, YouTube, Google+) will be utilized for communications and engagement purposes (outlined below). Though the tools are free, there will be staff time devoted to scheduling announcements, etc. through a TweetDeck or HootSuite interface. The selected communication and engagement consultant(s) will also integrate the social media tool kit in their work. The use of mobile phone and texting tools will also be reviewed.

General Information

- Meeting Announcements (Board, etc.)
- Specific presentations and discussions
- Speaking Engagements (external)

Consortium News (I.E. GCRTA joins the Consortium)

- Referencing GCRTA twitter address in tweet
- Website Updates
- Livecasting of meetings?

Knowledge Sharing

- External content: ie. Oberlin Project Releases Energy Market Study, HUD releases new report, etc.
- Other events related to initiative from Consortium Members and other related groups

Data Gathering

- Surveys/digital engagement through Facebook Followers
- Metrics for awareness and measurement

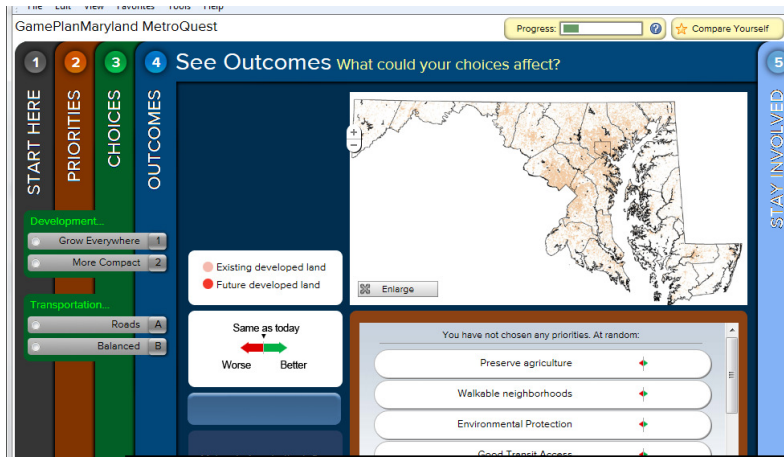
Networking

- Build presence in the community
- Attract attendees for engagement

Website

The website is viewed a multipurpose public platform for the engagement plan and in particular for the LEARNING, SHARING, CREATING, ACT themes. The NEOSCC has identified the following as key objectives for the website and social media:

- **“Information Hub”** for Board Members, Stakeholders and Residents relative to upcoming meetings and background information;
- **“Engagement Window”** providing a location for dialogue, idea exchange, plan comments and action (Samples of on-line engagement tools below) – this could **also include a blog written by experts or technical staff**
- **“Educational Tool”** displaying best practices and creating a tool box for the Consortium Members and the greater community;
- **“Celebration Spot”** highlight regional assets and cumulative progress on existing initiatives as well as the NEOSCC process; and
- **“Network Weaver”** fostering and documenting connections and networks throughout the planning process and beyond. One of the critical components of the NEOSCC initiative will be the development of a “network of networks” across the region. This will ensure future collaboration and access to expertise.



<http://planmaryland.metroquest.com/>



<http://communityforums.org/>

While the NEOSCC would entertain proposals for new site development, we do acknowledge that many successful existing platforms do exist both regionally and nationally. Based on our schedule, budget and potential efficiencies, the organization will analyze with the selected website consultant, how these existing platforms could be put to use in the NEOSCC initiative. The NEOSCC will also investigate the use of QR Codes for linking to the website.

On-Going Outreach Campaigns

In order to grow identity of the on-going exchange of ideas and opinions throughout the engagement process, the following two campaigns are being developed. The implementation plans for each campaign will be defined with the assistance of the communication and engagement consultant(s).

- Year One: Through the a variety of platforms: telling stories and highlighting data that explain the context of the project as well as conveying success stories related to collaboration and doing more with less.
- NEED: Identify data points and stories to tell i.e.:
 - housing + transportation cost
 - life expectancy data
 - cost of infrastructure
- SOURCE: Work stream committees and other reseach - NEED TO IDENTIFY HOW THIS GETS COLLECTED
- TIMELINE: Data identified by 2/15
- COMMUNICATION: Soft launch - 2/21; more formal campaign developed with Communications Consultant in March
- Year Two: Through the Vibrant Northeast Ohio Platform: telling very short stories and highlighting data to explain the approach of creating a new, sustainable way of thinking what we are trying to do that resonate with people.

Didya (k)NEO?



- Citizen and external organization driven; this series will allow the public to voice their opinion, submit ideas and photography/video throughout the process. The launch will take place in the 1st quarter of 2012 with a public photography project focused on what makes Northeast Ohio a vibrant region.
- Launch with a video featuring a local celebrity
- Public photography/comment campaign illustrating what works and what doesn't work - could include voting process
- Submissions collected geographically and posted on website and potentially included in a travelling pop-up gallery? Perhaps coordinated with 12C in 12 Months.
- TIMELINE: Scope of program defined by 2/01, engage a small contract (under \$25,000) consultant to get up and running
- COMMUNICATION: Soft launch - 2/21; more formal campaign developed with Communications Consultant in March

myNEO!



Newsletter

The NEOSCC recently launched a monthly newsletter in January for distribution to the Consortium members and organizations as well as to the general public.

The newsletter highlights Consortium updates, project and work stream progress and upcoming meetings and events. It will also feature links to recent presentations (board meetings, work stream and others) that will bring the reader to the NEOSCC website.

Another component of the newsletter will be to highlight relevant external perspectives through links and summaries of regional and national studies and articles.

Once the volunteer program has been further defined, the publication will also include volunteer events and opportunities.

Media

In partnership with the selected media consultant(s), NEOSCC will develop a geographically integrated media outreach strategy. This strategy will be launched in 1st quarter 2012 to coincide with the engagement process. The first objective of this outreach will be to further illuminate the context and realities of the region as the existing conditions and best practices reports are being written. ***While potential consultants can submit individually for the consultant position, the NEOSCC is encouraging teams to be developed across Northeast Ohio.***

The media outreach program will include:

- Solidifying relationships with key media (print, broadcast, digital) throughout the 12 counties;
- Identifying key reporters, understand stories of interest;
- Publicizing “events”/news
- Creating media releases and content; and
- Advising of on-the-ground issues within distinct regional media markets.

Media Partnerships: During the first quarter of 2012, the NEOSCC will also open discussions with the four newspapers throughout the region on the potential for media partnerships. This will also include outreach to the local public radio and television networks.



Presentations

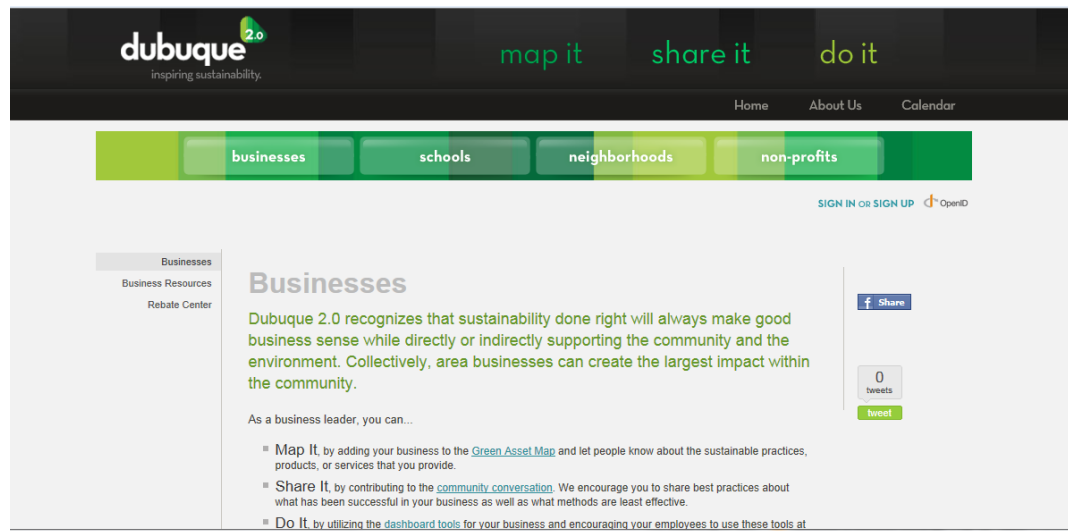
The NEOSCC will also pursue speaking engagements throughout Northeast Ohio to discuss the initiative and its progress. A speaker bureau and training will be developed to engage the board and staff in presentations.

Volunteering

The number of volunteer opportunities is still being determined particularly as it relates to the Work Streams. The Communications and Engagement Committee will work with the selected engagement consultant(s) to further define and publish volunteer opportunities throughout the project.

Advisory Committees:

While there are currently no opportunities for advisory types of committees, the Communications and Engagement committee will develop a proposal for potential business and civic involvement on an advisory level. Of particular interest will be the connection of the citizen involvement to the current citizen committees of the MPO's. The NEOSCC sees the planning process and a unique opportunity to further develop the CIC Committees of NOACA, Eastgate, AMATS, SCATS and NEFCO.



In developing this planning document, numerous examples have been found that feature a prominent role for the business sector in the planning process. The Dubuque 2.0 Regional Sustainability Initiative initiated dialogue with the business community and engaged them at the onset of the project. The initiative website features a business forum where business can exchange information on sustainability and find business related news.

Engagement Tools and Methods

A great emphasis during the development of the engagement plan has been on the use of unconventional or new methods for engagement. Based on the established goals and principles of engagement, the following questions were raised, **“HOW DO WE ADDRESS ENGAGEMENT IN UNIQUE WAYS?” HOW CAN WE CREATE WITH PEOPLE, NOT REPORT TO THEM?** *While a number of different strategies and tactics have been discovered, the Communications and Engagement Committee will work with the selected engagement consultant(s) and the Project Management Office to create and identify the methods to be utilized. The planned engagement from the work plan included three metro area public meetings and three region wide summits. During the first six months of 2012, the NEOSCC will test and evaluate methods for engagement that may become complimentary to these events or serve as replacements. Each quarter and as situations arise, the Communications and Engagement Committee will examine progress and evaluate effectiveness. This may lead to mid-course corrections as needed.* In reviewing the engagement methods, the analysis will include relevance to the goals and principles of the communication and engagement plan along with the depth, scale and enduring qualities of the options. The following methods will be examined further and potentially employed:

One of the attributes of all of these methods will be a focus on action. This list is not meant to only be unconventional but also be adaptable to a variety of cultures and create enduring opportunities.

<p>Small, Large and Regional Convenings These face to face events will be customized with the selected consultant to ensure that all principles and goals of the engagement plan are being met.</p>	
<p>Granting Program The Portland PDX and Twin Cities Corridors of Opportunities engagement strategies have developed small grant programs to empower organizations to lead their engagement efforts. While varying in scale (\$3000 to \$60000) both initiatives have used the grants as an opportunity to build capacity and inspire leadership.</p>	<p>On-Line Mapping/Games On-line platform to encourage regional and sustainable planning by residents. Interactive platform could be a puzzle building, planning simulations or visualization surveys (MetroQuest, CrowdBrite). This could also be rolled out as a travelling technology to reach those without access.</p>
<p>Pop-Up Meetings/Travelling Engagement Smaller scale meetings led through an ambassador program allowing for more nimble and adaptable formats.</p>	<p>Vibrant/Vital Score Development of a scoring system for sustainability factors locally and regionally.</p>
<p>Connections to Arts and Performance Events A few examples from throughout the country have utilized performance events as a means to engage the public in a dialogue.</p>	<p>Consortium Member Events Throughout the two year planning window, consortium organizations will be holding numerous events. These could be utilized as vehicles for engagement and involvement.</p>