



April 2018

The Greenest Region **Compact (GRC)** presents consensus goals for environmental sustainability to be addressed by local municipalities, yet it will have coordinated, positive impacts on a much larger scale. Municipalities throughout the region are invited to formally endorse the GRC and work in concert to achieve its goals.

The GRC **Framework** is the companion document that provides suggested objectives, strategies and tools to help communities achieve consensus goals of the GRC.

The details of the Framework are organized around the 10 categories and 49 consensus goals of the GRC. *See the complete GRC and sample municipal resolution in the Appendix.* The 10 categories are:

- |                         |                            |
|-------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1. Climate              | 2. Economic Development    |
| 3. Energy               | 4. Land                    |
| 5. Leadership           | 6. Mobility                |
| 7. Municipal Operations | 8. Sustainable Communities |
| 9. Water                | 10. Waste & Recycling      |

#### **Introduction**

The Framework is built on 30 sustainability plans and guiding documents already in use by Illinois municipalities. It also incorporates more than 10 documents from regional, national or global organizations that are widely used to guide sustainable municipal actions. More than 1150 actual sustainability goals and objectives are synthesized into this Framework resulting in a broad and comprehensive guidance for municipal sustainability. Fundamentally, the Framework is built from goals and actions that are broadly applicable and suited to municipal action.

Dozens of partners, advisors and stakeholder groups contributed additional objectives, strategies and tools supportive of the consensus GRC goals, and for this we are grateful. See Appendix. These contributions help connect the consensus goals to achieve greater positive impacts at the regional, state, national and global levels. Many of the partner programs cited in the Framework offer assistance and guidance to help municipalities achieve GRC objectives, thus creating a synergy between local efforts and existing resources.

For more information on the methodology used to construct the Framework see the full report, [Greenest Region Compact, Opportunities + Impact](#), Metropolitan Mayors Caucus, 2014.

#### **How to Use the GRC Framework**

The Framework can guide municipalities of all sizes and strengths towards sustainability actions. For communities with no formal sustainability plan, the extensive Framework offers a menu of options that could be used to construct a local, tailored sustainability plan. Communities can begin by assessing actions already accomplished and underway. Then they may choose priority objectives and strategies on which they will begin work. The Framework is broadly applicable to most communities so users will need to refine and tailor objectives and strategies to suit. Municipalities may choose as many of the goals and objectives as they wish and address them on their own timeline.

Communities currently guided by their own sustainability plans will likely recognize specific goals and elements of their own plans in the Framework. The Framework may offer additional options for achieving their established goals, or suggestions for updating an existing plan.

#### **Framework Structure**

The following pages are formatted to prompt self-assessment and guide preliminary selection of priority objectives and strategies.

The Framework is structured to expand on the GRC Compact goals in each category (column C). **Objectives** are adjacent (column E) to each GRC2 goal and are labeled for reference, i.e., E10 is the tenth objective in the Energy (E) category.

**Strategies** are preceded with the symbol ">" and labeled with an additional letter, i.e. E10b as they relate to the numbered objective. Not every objective is paired with specific strategies.

**Advanced strategies** are preceded with the symbol "+". These are extra, progressive steps, usually suggested by stakeholders, that communities may wish to take to advance certain GRC goals.

**Links to resources**, such as certification programs or model ordinances, which may be considered tactics, are offered for some objectives and strategies. These are indicated by "Y" in column M.

Assessment of the relevance and priority of each objective and strategy may be guided by prompts in columns F-L.

Because the nature of sustainability is its inter-relationship of social, economic and environment elements, objectives and strategies are also inter-related. Actions to improve land stewardship will improve water resources; improved active transportation choices will enhance healthy lifestyles and more. Therefore, actions with complementary outcomes may be found in different sections of the Framework. Policy, Stewardship and Outreach and Education are common elements in nearly every category.

#### **How to Use the GRC Framework Tool**

As an Excel document, the Tool allows you to use the Filter feature to view only the rows (strategies and objectives) you wish to see. Set these filter up in *columns F-L*.

To start, go through the objectives and strategies to identify issues that are not relevant in *column L*. For example, if your water supply is Lake Michigan, you can mark "x" in *column L* for groundwater issues (W55). Filter to hide all those rows marked as not relevant. Next, consider assessing what your community has already achieved and in-progress using *column F and G*. Incorporate this into your plan and report these achievements.

Next, thoughtfully review remaining objectives and strategies with a team to determine which ones you want to pursue and in what time frame in *columns H,I, J and K*. There is space for collaborators to initial and comment in *columns M and O*.

Your marked-up and shortened Framework will provide a foundation for your own sustainability planning process. Use the Filter feature to view your selected objectives from short and long term perspectives. You decide which objectives and strategies ultimately end up in your own plan and how you want to use them.

#### **Greenest Region Compact and the Future Sustainability Network**

The Metropolitan Mayors Caucus plans future supportive programs and resources to accelerate community actions in pursuit of the GRC consensus goals. A future Sustainability Network will develop pathways and leveraging strategies to develop capital sustainability projects. Future metrics, a reporting mechanism, and recognition for participating communities, is also planned.

#### **Acknowledgements**

The GRC and companion Framework have been made possible due to the generous support of the Searle Funds at The Chicago Community Trust. The Environment Committee of the Metropolitan Mayors Caucus, under the leadership of John Ostenburg, Mayor, Village of Park Forest and Mayor Barrett Pedersen, Mayor, Village of Franklin Park, has guided this work. The Executive Board is gratefully acknowledged for leading Caucus staff and committees.

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**Metropolitan Mayors Caucus 2018**