



# WASHINGTON HEIGHTS Sustainable Vision Plan

Prepared by the Queens Tower Community In Partnership with:







Neighbors and Friends,

In 2010 eight neighborhoods set out to improve their communities and simultaneously made a commitment to lessen their impact on the environment through the Neighborhood Energy Challenge. Shortly thereafter, 11 additional neighborhoods made a similar commitment through Power2 Live Green. This unprecedented partnership allowed us all an opportunity to explore the communities we live in through a new lens called "sustainability."

Together we evaluated tree cover, parks, open spaces and natural elements in our neighborhoods. You and your neighbors considered access to local and healthy food and the transportation options that accommodate travel to the places where you live, work, and play. We learned about ourselves and each other by understanding how we live, how much water and energy we use at home, how we manage the waste products that result from our choices and how our actions compare to the actions of others.

With these factors in mind, each of your communities' implemented projects that made our homes more efficient, shared knowledge, expanded transportation options or made our streets safer at night. You did this in ways that were creative, encouraged neighbors to work together, developed partnerships and made your neighborhoods even better places to live. Lastly, you worked together to set a solid foundation for the future.

The community goals established within this Sustainable Vision Plan are YOURS. They represent your ideas, concerns, opportunities and dreams for a different and better tomorrow. We hope that this plan will become a living document within your community, one that you will reference to remember the goals your community established and the commitments you made. We also hope that you gained something in the process of rolling up your sleeves and working side by side with your friends and neighbors. I can assure you that we did.

Its neighbors like you that inspire others and continue to improve the quality of life for all of us. We look forward to seeing you continue this journey!

Nicole R. Storey, AICP  
City of Charlotte  
Neighborhood & Business Services



# Table of Contents

## I. Primary Community Sustainability Goals:

1. Increase Local Food Use and Production by Improving the Community Garden  
Target: Double the size of the community garden and double the number of volunteers who work the garden by December 2012.
2. Create a Teen Center and Increase the use of Parks  
Target: Establish a committee to explore a teen center by December 2012.
3. Reduce Energy Use  
Target: Have at least twenty-five (25) households and five (5) businesses attend an energy saving workshop by December, 2012.

## II. Additional Sustainability Goals:

1. Reduce Reliance on Individual Vehicles
2. Reduce Waste
3. Reduce Water Use and Water Pollution
4. Create a Communications Plan

## III. Additional Sustainability Resources

## IV. Blank Page for Your Notes and Ideas

## Appendix: Sustainable Vision Plan Visioning Notes

### Key Words:

**Primary Community Sustainability Goals-** The goals that were selected by participants as the communities' highest priorities during the Sustainable Vision Plan Process.

**Additional Sustainability Goals-** Goals that were established, but identified as secondary to the Primary Community Sustainability Goals.

### Each Goal will contain the following:

**Target-** A metric that allows the community to measure progress toward achieving their goals.

**Ideas to Help You Get Started-** Suggested actions to initiate movement towards achieving community goals. Strategies and related resources have also been provided to assist with these activities and others

**Strategies-** Additional ideas for your community to consider as you move toward achieving your goals.

**Related Resources-** Organizations, people, and websites to aid in fulfilling your community's Sustainability Goals

# Primary Community Sustainability Goal #1: Increase Local Food Use and Production by Improving the Community Garden

**Target:** Double the size of the community garden and double the number of volunteers who work the garden by December 2012

## Ideas to Get You Started

- Start an inventory of tools throughout the community and create a community tool-share for use in the community garden and elsewhere.
- Establish a weekly walking group, carpool or vanpool to a farmers market; ask for volunteers with large capacity vehicles to be the drivers.
- Distribute contact information for local Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) programs on the neighborhood website, in the newsletter and/or on door-to-door flyers.
- Host an event that shares community knowledge about gardening and canning, freezing or preserving seasonal fruits and vegetables.
- For more community garden space, ask businesses, churches or neighbors to allow access to land that isn't currently being used.
- Host a community potluck or use e-mail to share recipes that feature seasonal foods and ingredients.
- Start container gardens on porches or patios. Tomatoes, cucumbers, zucchini, squash, herbs, etc. can all be grown easily in pots, gutter installations, pallet gardens or other vertical gardening methods. Be creative.
- Label plants in gardens to help children identify what can be grown locally.

## Helpful Strategies and Resources

Strategies	Related Resources
Locate farmer's markets and other sources of local food.	<p><b>Local Farmer's Markets:</b> <a href="http://tinyurl.com/6o2zsix">http://tinyurl.com/6o2zsix</a></p> <p><b>Mecklenburg County's List of Farmers Markets-</b> <a href="http://tinyurl.com/cl2jvdf">http://tinyurl.com/cl2jvdf</a></p> <p><b>Sow Much Good-</b> Helps provide organic foods to all populations at below market value and creates opportunities for individuals to take part in the development of local, sustainable food sources <a href="http://www.sowmuchgood.org/">www.sowmuchgood.org/</a></p> <p><b>Real Time Farms Farmer's Markets Map-</b> Also helps you find nearby farms <a href="http://www.realtimefarms.com/markets">www.realtimefarms.com/markets</a></p> <p><b>Eat Well Guide-</b>Check out Charlotte's guide and use the search function to find restaurants and stores nearby <a href="http://www.eatwellguide.org/localguide/">http://www.eatwellguide.org/localguide/</a></p>
Join a Community Sponsored Agriculture program (CSA).	<p><b>Local Harvest-</b> find CSAs, Farmer's markets, and grocery stores nearby <a href="http://www.localharvest.org/">http://www.localharvest.org/</a></p> <p><b>Mecklenburg County's List of CSAs-</b> <a href="http://tinyurl.com/c837qpx">http://tinyurl.com/c837qpx</a></p>
Create a community garden and/or home gardens.	<p><b>Friendship Gardens-</b> information and classes about gardening and food preservation <a href="http://www.friendship-gardens.org/">http://www.friendship-gardens.org/</a></p> <p><b>The Historic Northwest Community Toolshed-</b> Free tools available for a small application fee of \$5 for individuals and \$15 for groups <a href="http://tinyurl.com/cukkgg5">http://tinyurl.com/cukkgg5</a></p> <p><b>Mecklenburg County Fruit and Vegetable Coalition-</b> Community Garden Listings and more <a href="http://tinyurl.com/cew3w6e">http://tinyurl.com/cew3w6e</a></p> <p><b>Mecklenburg Master Gardener-</b> Classes, resources, demonstration gardens, and more <a href="http://www.mastergardenersmecklenburg.org/resource--reference-links.html">http://www.mastergardenersmecklenburg.org/resource--reference-links.html</a></p> <p><b>NC State's Community Garden Advice-</b> <a href="http://www.nccommunitygarden.ncsu.edu">www.nccommunitygarden.ncsu.edu</a></p> <p><b>Pallet Gardens-</b> <a href="http://lifeonthebalcony.com/how-to-turn-a-pallet-into-a-garden/">http://lifeonthebalcony.com/how-to-turn-a-pallet-into-a-garden/</a></p> <p><b>University of Illinois Container Gardening Tips-</b> <a href="http://urbanext.illinois.edu/containergardening/">http://urbanext.illinois.edu/containergardening/</a></p> <p><b>NC Department of Agriculture Seasonal Food Guide-</b> <a href="http://www.ncagr.gov/markets/chart.htm">http://www.ncagr.gov/markets/chart.htm</a></p> <p><b>Charlotte Green-</b> Assists interested and organized community groups in beautifying their neighborhoods by planting on vacant lots, on curbs, at private residences, and more <a href="http://www.charlottegreen.org">www.charlottegreen.org</a></p> <p><b>CharMeck Park and Rec Community Gardens-</b> Apply to lease a plot in one of Charlotte's park's community gardens <a href="http://tinyurl.com/bwoueq8">http://tinyurl.com/bwoueq8</a></p> <p><b>Microfarm Organic Gardens-</b> Devoted to the art of edible organic gardening. Organic garden design, maintenance, and other gardening services to the Charlotte area <a href="http://www.microfarmgardens.com/">www.microfarmgardens.com/</a></p> <p><b>Instant Organic Garden-</b> Garden planning, installation, and support <a href="http://www.instantorganicgarden.com">www.instantorganicgarden.com</a> or call Don Rosenberg at (704) 910-6498</p> <p><b>CharMeck Park Services-</b> Includes construction and maintenance of community gardens. Contact Tim Turton at <a href="mailto:Timothy.Turton@Mecklenburgcountync.gov">Timothy.Turton@Mecklenburgcountync.gov</a> or visit <a href="http://www.tinyurl.com/d5yo3ns">www.tinyurl.com/d5yo3ns</a></p>

# Primary Community Sustainability Goal #2: Create a Teen Center and Increase the Use of Parks

**Target:** Establish a committee to explore a teen center by December 2012

## Ideas to Get You Started

- Volunteer with Mecklenburg County Park and Rec. to learn about and participate in recreational activities. Visit <http://charmeck.org/mecklenburg/county/ParkandRec/Pages/Volunteer.aspx> or email Lori Saylor at [lori.saylor@mecklenburgcountync.gov](mailto:lori.saylor@mecklenburgcountync.gov).
  - Current Volunteer Opportunities- <http://charmeck.org/mecklenburg/county/ParkandRec/Documents/Current%20Volunteer%20Opportunities.pdf>
- Form a walking or running group that meets in the park walks or runs together once a day or once a week.
- Work with existing facilities to expand programs and schedules.
- Ask runners in the community to map a safe and challenging 5k route through the community. Share this map or consider marking the locations with paint and/or signage.
- Plan a community tree-planting event in the park, neighborhood, or by the creek. Suggested dates: Earth Day (April 22, 2013), Arbor Day (the first Friday after March 15).
- Host regular community and park clean up events.
- Host an event or community challenge in the park to remind residents of the facilities that already exist. Don't forget to include activities for the children.
- Find out about camps and after school programs that are available to provide additional recreation opportunities. Share this information.

Strategies	Related Resources
Take advantage of parks and greenways.	<p><b>CharMeck Parks and Recreation-</b> <a href="http://www.parkandrec.com">www.parkandrec.com</a></p> <p><b>CharMeck Parks and Rec Events and Activities Schedule and Registration-</b> Learn about camps, after school programs, sports, fitness, arts, and more that goes on at parks and rec <a href="http://tinyurl.com/ckodgo4">http://tinyurl.com/ckodgo4</a></p> <p><b>Irwin Creek Greenway-</b> <a href="http://charmeck.org/mecklenburg/county/ParkandRec/Greenways/OpenGreenways/Pages/IrwinCreek.aspx">http://charmeck.org/mecklenburg/county/ParkandRec/Greenways/OpenGreenways/Pages/IrwinCreek.aspx</a> Contact Gwen Cook for more information (704) 432-1570, <a href="mailto:gwen.cook@mecklenburgcountync.gov">gwen.cook@mecklenburgcountync.gov</a></p> <p><b>Mecklenburg County Park Services-</b> Responsible for greenway repairs and maintenance <a href="http://www.tinyurl.com/d5yo3ns">www.tinyurl.com/d5yo3ns</a>, Contact Tim Turton with comments and questions at <a href="mailto:timothy.turton@mecklenburgcountync.gov">timothy.turton@mecklenburgcountync.gov</a></p> <p><b>Greenway Maintenance-</b> Contact Bob Rearden at 704-432-1980</p> <p><b>Greenway Planning Questions-</b> Contact Gwen Cook at 704-432-1570</p>
Increase the amount of plants and landscaping in public areas.	<p><b>Keep Charlotte Beautiful-</b> Maintain and improve the cleanliness and beauty of the city through garden grants, adopt-a-street and adopt-a-neighborhood programs, and more <a href="http://tinyurl.com/ccx4ig2">http://tinyurl.com/ccx4ig2</a></p> <p><b>Charlotte Green-</b> Assists interested and well-organized community groups to beautify their neighborhoods by planting on vacant lots, on curbs, at private residences, and more <a href="http://www.charlottegreen.org">www.charlottegreen.org</a></p> <p><b>Charlotte Neighborhood Matching Grants-</b> fund eligible neighborhood improvements such as signage, cleanups, landscape projects, and more <a href="http://tinyurl.com/c2vglsj">http://tinyurl.com/c2vglsj</a></p> <p><b>Mecklenburg County Annual Tree Seedling Sale-</b> by planting trees, save energy, reduce noise, increase property values, and improve appearance <a href="http://tinyurl.com/cqfxll2">http://tinyurl.com/cqfxll2</a></p> <p><b>Cooperative Tree Planting Program-</b> offers neighborhoods the opportunity to partner with the City to plant trees in Charlotte neighborhoods. For more information, call 704-336-4262.</p> <p><b>City of Charlotte Landscape Management-</b> information on roadside appearance and neighborhood improvement <a href="http://tinyurl.com/csa88yu">http://tinyurl.com/csa88yu</a></p> <p><b>The Historic Northwest Community Toolshed-</b> Free tools available for a small application fee <a href="http://tinyurl.com/cukkgg5">http://tinyurl.com/cukkgg5</a></p>

# Primary Community Sustainability Goal #3: Reduce Energy Use

**Target:** Have at least twenty-five (25) households and five (5) businesses attend an energy saving workshop by December, 2012

## Ideas to Get You Started

- Distribute the Department of Energy home energy reduction checklist to the community, challenge to accomplish at least three (3) items each month (see resource below).
- Organize a neighborhood household energy-saving competition. Distribute energy saving tips, have residents track their usage over a set period of time, compare savings, and decide on a prize.
- Organize a community weatherization team- have participants volunteer to install low cost improvements such as caulking, weather-stripping, insulating window film, etc.
- Distribute information for Duke Energy’s free CFL Light bulb and Home Energy House Call. Fill out a form at <http://www.duke-energy.com/north-carolina/savings/home-energy-house-call.asp> or call 1-877-388-7676 to sign up.
- Challenge children to be energy ambassadors. Reward them for ensuring that lights are turned off at home. Make t-shirts, hats, stickers, or something else for them to identify themselves.

## Helpful Strategies and Resources

Strategies	Related Resources
Compare previous and current power bills.	<b>Duke Energy Online Services</b> - Duke Energy Online Services- Past and current energy bills are available online using Duke Energy’s online services <a href="https://www.duke-energy.com/residential.asp">https://www.duke-energy.com/residential.asp</a>
Evaluate home energy use and research ways to reduce usage through small changes in behavior.	<b>U.S. Department of Energy Home Energy Checklist</b> - <a href="http://www1.eere.energy.gov/femp/services/energy_aware_hec.html">http://www1.eere.energy.gov/femp/services/energy_aware_hec.html</a> Check out the Power Manager® program to receive <b>\$32 in bill credits</b> each year <a href="http://www.tinyurl.com/d8lgxbs">www.tinyurl.com/d8lgxbs</a> Home Energy House Call- <a href="http://www.duke-energy.com/north-carolina/savings/home-energy-house-call.asp">http://www.duke-energy.com/north-carolina/savings/home-energy-house-call.asp</a> <b>Power2Charlotte</b> - resources and tips on reducing energy usage from the City <a href="http://www.power2charlotte.com/">http://www.power2charlotte.com/</a> <b>U.S. DOE EnergySavers</b> -Tips on reducing home energy use- <a href="http://www.energysavers.gov/your_home/electricity/index.cfm/mytopic=11140">http://www.energysavers.gov/your_home/electricity/index.cfm/mytopic=11140</a> <b>Piedmont Natural Gas Tips and Rebates</b> - <a href="http://tinyurl.com/7ty8zif">http://tinyurl.com/7ty8zif</a> <b>US Department of Energy</b> - Learn about saving energy at home. Check out the rest of the DOE website as well <a href="http://www.doe.gov/public-services/homes">www.doe.gov/public-services/homes</a> <b>NC Green Power</b> - Tips for adults and kids <a href="http://www.ncgreenpower.org/conservation/">http://www.ncgreenpower.org/conservation/</a> <b>My Energy™</b> - A website that gives you an easy way to understand, manage, and save home energy. <a href="http://www.myenergy.com">http://www.myenergy.com</a> <b>Duke Energy Youtility Program</b> - provides tips for saving energy: <a href="http://www.duke-energy.com/youtility/">http://www.duke-energy.com/youtility/</a> <b>The Energy Detective ® (TED®)</b> - Monitor home-energy usage in real time, save money on your bill <a href="http://www.theenergydetective.com">www.theenergydetective.com</a>
Encourage the use of clotheslines, investigate installing a community clothesline.	<b>Do-It-Yourself Clothesline</b> - <a href="http://www.doityourself.com/stry/puttingupclothesline">www.doityourself.com/stry/puttingupclothesline</a> <b>Tip the Planet Air Dry Washing Tips</b> - Dozens of styles of indoor and outdoor clotheslines and links to manufacturers and even more ideas. <a href="http://www.tipthepplanet.com/index.php?title=Air_dry_washing">http://www.tipthepplanet.com/index.php?title=Air_dry_washing</a>
Residential Energy Audits	<b>Home Energy Assessment</b> - Learn how to do your own assessment to see how much energy your home uses and how much it wastes. <a href="http://www.tinyurl.com/bqf926s">www.tinyurl.com/bqf926s</a> <b>Duke-Energy Home Energy House Call</b> - Free home energy assessment. Not available for rental properties. <a href="http://www.tinyurl.com/blt9tge">www.tinyurl.com/blt9tge</a>
Improve home energy efficiency through weatherization and energy retrofitting.	<b>Residential Energy Services Network</b> - Locate Certified RESNET Home Energy Professionals <a href="http://www.resnet.us/directory/search">www.resnet.us/directory/search</a> <b>Building Performance Institute (BPI)</b> - Locate companies with BPI certified professionals on staff and BPI accredited contractors <a href="http://tinyurl.com/c6oo4wb">http://tinyurl.com/c6oo4wb</a> <b>U.S. DOE Information on Insulation and Air Sealing</b> - <a href="http://www.energysavers.gov/your_home/insulation_airsealing/index.cfm/mytopic=11280">http://www.energysavers.gov/your_home/insulation_airsealing/index.cfm/mytopic=11280</a> <b>NC Weatherization Program</b> - Energy savings through insulation and energy efficiency services to income eligible households <a href="http://www.tinyurl.com/3sllld14">www.tinyurl.com/3sllld14</a> <b>Free Efficient Light Bulbs</b> - Eligible Duke Energy customers can request Compact Fluorescent Light Bulbs (CFLs) (while supplies last) <a href="http://www.duke-energy.com/freecfls/">http://www.duke-energy.com/freecfls/</a> <b>Energy Star</b> - Energy Star appliances are highly efficient, this website also has energy-saving tips <a href="http://www.energystar.gov/">www.energystar.gov/</a>
Install neighborhood solar Photovoltaic panels in a public area as an exhibit--power streetlights.	<b>US Department of Energy</b> - Information and Resources about solar heating and power. <a href="http://tinyurl.com/cnhekjo">http://tinyurl.com/cnhekjo</a> <b>North Carolina Energy Discounts</b> - Information and links to discounts for renewable energy in North Carolina. <a href="http://tinyurl.com/6ud45s8">http://tinyurl.com/6ud45s8</a> <b>Local Solar PV and Solar Thermal Certified Professionals</b> - <a href="http://tinyurl.com/7vcelmj">http://tinyurl.com/7vcelmj</a> <b>Charlotte Neighborhood Matching Grants</b> - fund eligible neighborhood improvements such as signage, cleanups, landscape projects, and more <a href="http://tinyurl.com/c2vglsj">http://tinyurl.com/c2vglsj</a> <b>Greener Products Solar Smart Program</b> - Greener Products will install a solar system on the applicant’s (host) roof-top or land at no cost. During the term of twenty years the host will receive a share of the revenue generated by the system. In addition the host will receive \$1000.00 once the system is in full operation <a href="http://tinyurl.com/cgezftf">http://tinyurl.com/cgezftf</a>

# Additional Sustainability Goal: Reduce Reliance on Individual Vehicles

## Ideas to Get You Started

- Talk to nearby businesses about installing bike racks to encourage people to bike. **FREE** bike racks are available to eligible businesses by calling Ken Tippetts at 704-336-2278 or [ktippetts@ci.charlotte.nc.us](mailto:ktippetts@ci.charlotte.nc.us).
- Plan a group transit ride to an uptown event or the grocery store to show neighbors how easy public transit can be.
- Use bus passes as a reward for an alternative transportation competition.
- Have students ride the school bus or carpool to school instead of driving them independently.
- Compile and distribute a contact sheet of families, organized by schools their children attend, to help facilitate the creation of carpools.
- Form a community walking group to promote walking.
- Organize a bike event to educate residents about bike safety and the best bike routes. Include a group bike-ride.
- Distribute information about current transit routes.
- Walk the community to identify hazards or obstacles that may make it difficult to access bus stops. Work with the City to remove those obstacles.
- Challenge neighbors to have an alternative transportation day. Show them how easy and safe it is to use transit, walk, or bike.
- Assign bike mentors to help neighbors plan safe and efficient routes to services or select locations. Share these notes with the neighborhood.

## Helpful Strategies and Resources

Strategies	Related Resources
Use public transit more often.	<p><b>Find out if your Employer Offers Discount Transit Passes for CATS-</b> <a href="http://tinyurl.com/brkxeyo">http://tinyurl.com/brkxeyo</a></p> <p><b>CATS iPhone App-</b> bus routes, schedules, etc. <a href="http://tinyurl.com/7pjklbq">http://tinyurl.com/7pjklbq</a></p> <p><b>CATS and LYNX Transit Schedules-</b> Bus and train routes, also has information on carpools <a href="http://tinyurl.com/85o384d">http://tinyurl.com/85o384d</a></p>
Establish a carpool system	<p><b>Charlotte Area Transit Center (CATS) Carpool Connections-</b> Find other riders with similar commutes interested in carpooling <a href="http://tinyurl.com/7tk2pzs">http://tinyurl.com/7tk2pzs</a></p>
Promote walking and pedestrian safety.	<p><b>Request a Traffic Calming Remedy for the Neighborhood-</b> Includes multi-way stops, speed limit reduction, speed humps, and traffic circles. Contact CharMeck 311 or fill out the form at <a href="http://www.tinyurl.com/d232ydf">www.tinyurl.com/d232ydf</a> or <a href="http://www.tinyurl.com/bshglb9">www.tinyurl.com/bshglb9</a></p> <p><b>CharMeck Neighborhood Traffic Management-</b> Addresses residential traffic concerns <a href="http://tinyurl.com/chidjyw">http://tinyurl.com/chidjyw</a></p> <p><b>Request Sidewalks-</b> Charlotte's Department of Transportation's sidewalk program accepts requests for sidewalks on city streets <a href="http://tinyurl.com/d4kvcmb">http://tinyurl.com/d4kvcmb</a> or <a href="http://tinyurl.com/bt9hqun">http://tinyurl.com/bt9hqun</a></p> <p><b>Request Sidewalk Repair-</b> Contact the City by calling 311 or visiting <a href="http://tinyurl.com/c28szjq">http://tinyurl.com/c28szjq</a></p> <p><b>Request Streetlight Repair-</b> Contact the City by calling 311 or visiting <a href="http://tinyurl.com/ceglmfm">http://tinyurl.com/ceglmfm</a></p> <p><b>Request an Upgrade of Street Lighting-</b> Request brighter or different color lights. To request the form, call (704) 336-3893 or (704) 336-4119</p>
Encourage biking and walking	<p><b>Charlotte Department of Transportation Resources for Pedestrians and Bicyclists-</b> Find existing routes and other important information <a href="http://tinyurl.com/7lqm975">http://tinyurl.com/7lqm975</a></p> <p><b>CATS Bicycling Tips-</b> <a href="http://tinyurl.com/7r3gqku">http://tinyurl.com/7r3gqku</a></p> <p><b>Charlotte B-Cycle™-</b> Charlotte's new bike sharing system designed for short trips, with numerous stations located throughout Uptown Charlotte. Use their services and talk to them about installing a station near Park Crossing <a href="http://www.charlottebicycle.com">www.charlottebicycle.com</a></p> <p><b>Charlotte Neighborhood Matching Grants-</b> fund eligible neighborhood improvements such as signage, cleanups, landscape projects, and more <a href="http://tinyurl.com/c2vglsj">http://tinyurl.com/c2vglsj</a></p>
Research installing a path to provide access to the greenway and light-rail.	<p><b>Greenway Planning Questions-</b> Contact Gwen Cook at 704-432-1570</p> <p><b>Mecklenburg County Greenways-</b> <a href="http://charmeck.org/mecklenburg/county/ParkandRec/Greenways/Pages/default.aspx">http://charmeck.org/mecklenburg/county/ParkandRec/Greenways/Pages/default.aspx</a></p>

# Additional Sustainability Goal: Reduce Waste

## Ideas to Get You Started

- Distribute information about properly disposing of hazardous waste in the newsletter, at a meeting, or on a neighborhood website. Visit <http://tinyurl.com/9tu9emo> to learn more.
- Hold a community “Swap Shop” event where people exchange reusable items that they no longer need or want. Suggested items: building materials, blankets, pet carriers, bikes and bike parts and tools, books, furniture, clothing, art, office, and school supplies, bags, backpacks, etc.
- Start a “Craigslist” section in the newsletter or in e-mails for community members to notify neighbors of used items in good condition that they are willing to share, instead of throwing away.
- Encourage neighbors to buy products with less packaging, buy in bulk, use reusable shopping bags, don’t bag produce in individual plastic bags—simply put it with your other groceries.
- Request for volunteers to be “Recycling Captains” to send out a reminder each week on the day before recycling collection will occur. Washington Heights is a Friday Orange-week recycling collection neighborhood. Call 311 or (704) 336-7600 or see the calendar at <http://tinyurl.com/bnncgyb>.
- Contact Shred-It® at 1-877-601-4199 or visit <http://www.shredit.com/Shredding-Services/Community-Shred-it%E2%84%A2-Event.aspx> to organize a Community Shred-It event.
- Invite a county recycling representative to give a presentation at a neighborhood association meeting. Contact Erica Robinson at (704) 432-4225 or e-mail [curbit@charlottenc.gov](mailto:curbit@charlottenc.gov)
- Plan one or more “Recycling Day” celebrations each year. Suggested Dates: America Recycles Day (November 15 <http://americarecyclesday.org/> ), Earth Day (April 22, 2013).
- Host a composting workshop by a county representative at a community meeting. Call (704) 336-4304.
- Have residents bring batteries, CFLs and plastic bags to community events for collection. Have a neighbor volunteer to take these items to Lowe’s or other businesses that properly dispose of these items.
- Contact Salvation Army or Goodwill and have them arrange a community-wide donation pick up day.
- Draft a community agreement to only use reusable containers or compostable bags for yard waste disposal.

## Helpful Strategies and Resources

Strategies	Related Resources
Increase recycling and reduce waste.	<p><b>CharMeck’s Wipe Out Waste! Guide Book</b>- Information ranging from composting to recycling to disposing of hazardous waste <a href="http://tinyurl.com/bgrso2r">http://tinyurl.com/bgrso2r</a></p> <p><b>North Carolina Department of Environment and Natural Resources</b>- Several pages of resources for reducing waste and recycling <a href="http://www.p2pays.org/citizens.asp">http://www.p2pays.org/citizens.asp</a></p> <p><b>CharMeck Solid Waste Services</b>- Lots of important information and resources about recycling and reducing waste in Charlotte <a href="http://www.curbit.charmeck.org">www.curbit.charmeck.org</a></p> <p><b>Recycling Fundraising Programs</b>- <a href="http://tinyurl.com/7xt25yl">http://tinyurl.com/7xt25yl</a></p> <p><b>100 Ways to Reuse Items</b>- <a href="http://www.motherearthnews.com/modern-homesteading/reusing-things-zmaz76mazhar.aspx">http://www.motherearthnews.com/modern-homesteading/reusing-things-zmaz76mazhar.aspx</a></p> <p><b>Great American Can Roundup</b>- The Can Manufacturers Institute fundraiser <a href="http://www.cancentral.com/RoundUp/">http://www.cancentral.com/RoundUp/</a></p> <p><b>Mecklenburg County's "Wipe Out Waste" Program</b>- Everything you need to know about reducing waste in Mecklenburg County <a href="http://www.wipeoutwaste.com">http://www.wipeoutwaste.com</a></p> <p><b>Opt Out of Junk Mail and Telemarketers</b>- Call 212-768-7277 Ext. 1500; Call 888-567-8688; Call 800-645-9000; Call 800-243-9000; Call 800-620-3975; Call 1-888-382-1222; visit websites <a href="http://www.optoutprescreen.com">http://www.optoutprescreen.com</a> , <a href="http://www.catalochoice.org">http://www.catalochoice.org</a> , <a href="http://www.ecologicalmail.org">http://www.ecologicalmail.org</a> ; <a href="http://www.donotcall.gov">http://www.donotcall.gov</a>. Be sure to recycle any junk mail that may continue to come in the mail.</p>
Encourage home and community composting and post links to information on composting to the neighborhood website.	<p><b>Mecklenburg County Compost Workshops</b>- (704) 336-4304</p> <p><b>Mecklenburg County Home Composting Program</b>- Purchase compost and mulch, learn about home composting, find information on gardening <a href="http://www.tinyurl.com/84h6j65">www.tinyurl.com/84h6j65</a></p> <p><b>EPA Compost Advice</b>- <a href="http://www.epa.gov/epawaste/conserv/rrr/composting/by_compost.htm">http://www.epa.gov/epawaste/conserv/rrr/composting/by_compost.htm</a></p> <p><b>Do-It-Yourself Compost Bins</b>- Different styles of bins, instructions, and materials required to construct them. <a href="http://extension.missouri.edu/p/G6957">http://extension.missouri.edu/p/G6957</a></p> <p><b>Find Sources of Organic Matter for Compost Bins</b>- Bring in external sources to speed up the composting process <a href="http://nccommunitygarden.ncsu.edu/compost.html">http://nccommunitygarden.ncsu.edu/compost.html</a></p> <p><b>Mecklenburg County Compost Bin Discount</b>- Receive a discount on compost bins from select vendors simply for being a resident of Mecklenburg County <a href="http://www.tinyurl.com/cs88dji">www.tinyurl.com/cs88dji</a></p>

# Additional Sustainability Goal: Reduce Water Use and Water Pollution

## Ideas to Get You Started

- Organize a neighborhood water-saving competition. Distribute water saving tips, direct residents on how to track usage, and decide on a prize. Suggested prizes: rain barrel, low-flow or dual-flush toilet modifications.
- Adopt an agreement to only allow watering of lawns and plants in the mornings.
- Plan a community showerhead swap day through CharMeck Utilities’ showerhead swap program. To receive free low-flow showerheads while supplies last. Contact Maeneen Klein at 704-336-7600 or [mklein@ci.charlotte.nc.us](mailto:mklein@ci.charlotte.nc.us).
- Distribute a water use reduction checklist and challenge the community to complete one section (laundry, kitchen, landscaping, etc.) each week.
- Ask for neighbors with plumbing or repair experience to volunteer to help with water efficiency repairs.
- Replace lawns or portions of lawns with natural areas or plants that require little water (xeriscaping). Hold a monthly or quarterly contest to reward neighbors for attractive yards that save water.
- Collect rainwater in dishpans or other containers, use the water to water plants.
- Talk to local businesses who purchase supplies in bulk containers (restaurants, car washes, etc.). Use the containers to make-your-own rain barrels (See resource below).
- Volunteer with Storm Water Services. For all programs, Contact Deania Russo at [deania.russo@mecklenburgcountync.gov](mailto:deania.russo@mecklenburgcountync.gov) or (980) 722-8881 and visit <http://tinyurl.com/cpulm3x>.
  - Join the ADOPT-A-STREAM program. Irwin Creek, which runs through the golf course, is available.
  - Participate in Storm Water Services’ “Big Sweep 2012” on Saturday, September 29, 2012.
  - Volunteer as a community to mark storm drains with “Do Not Dump” signs throughout the neighborhood.
  - Participate in the Storm Water Services’ Creek Releaf Program by helping to plant trees at the Creek Releaf event on November 17, 2012. To sign up, visit [http://www.charlottetreefund.org/?page\\_id=6%29](http://www.charlottetreefund.org/?page_id=6%29).

Strategies	Related Resources
Reduce household water use.	<b>Household Water Conservation Checklist-</b> <a href="http://tinyurl.com/cd6nba6">http://tinyurl.com/cd6nba6</a> . <b>Indoor Water Conservation Ideas from the City-</b> <a href="http://tinyurl.com/c7eny53">http://tinyurl.com/c7eny53</a> <b>H<sub>2</sub>ouse-</b> Interactive tips and ideas for saving water at home <a href="http://www.h2ouse.org">www.h2ouse.org</a> <b>Free Low-Flow Shower Heads from Charlotte-Mecklenburg Utilities-</b> Contact Maeneen Klein at 704-336-7600 or <a href="mailto:mklein@ci.charlotte.nc.us">mklein@ci.charlotte.nc.us</a> <b>EPA Water-Sense-</b> Tips for saving water and information on water-efficient products <a href="http://www.epa.gov/watersense/">http://www.epa.gov/watersense/</a> <b>CharMeck Home Water Use Audit Guide-</b> Complete the audit and send it in to receive a free water conservation kit <a href="http://tinyurl.com/cpnsgpw">http://tinyurl.com/cpnsgpw</a> <b>Do-It-Yourself Toilet Water Conservation-</b> <a href="http://frugalliving.about.com/od/householdsavings/ht/Low_Flow.htm">http://frugalliving.about.com/od/householdsavings/ht/Low_Flow.htm</a>
Reduce the amount of irrigation of lawns and plants through efficiency.	<b>U.S. Department of Energy Water Efficient Landscaping-</b> Water in the mornings, plus more advice <a href="http://tinyurl.com/6rwc4mq">http://tinyurl.com/6rwc4mq</a> <b>Resource Efficient Landscaping-</b> incorporate tips with regard to your climate, microclimate, shading, windbreaks, and water use <a href="http://tinyurl.com/28mnxyh">http://tinyurl.com/28mnxyh</a> <b>Tips from CharMeck Utilities-</b> <a href="http://tinyurl.com/c3huynb">http://tinyurl.com/c3huynb</a>
Reduce storm-water generation through installing rain barrels and rain gardens.	<b>Do-It-Yourself Rainbarrels-</b> <a href="http://www.gardensimply.com/how-to-guides/build-rain-barrel.php">http://www.gardensimply.com/how-to-guides/build-rain-barrel.php</a> <b>Mecklenburg County Rain Barrel Sale-</b> 60 or 80 Gallon Rain Barrels at a reduced cost <a href="http://tinyurl.com/bnzjn5n">http://tinyurl.com/bnzjn5n</a>
Increase grey-water use.	<b>Greywater Recycling Basics-</b> <a href="http://www.letsogogreen.com/greywater-recycling.html">http://www.letsogogreen.com/greywater-recycling.html</a>

# Additional Sustainability Goal: Create a Communications Plan

## Ideas to Get You Started

- Form a communications committee to explore options. Elect a chairperson/secretary to be responsible for getting the word out.
- Designate “street” or “block” captains to distribute flyers with pertinent information regarding the community.
- Start an e-mail or paper newsletter, website, blog, or Facebook group to promote sustainability and community initiatives already underway and to solicit new ideas.
- Consider creating a smart phone application to share neighborhood events and information with your community. Services start around \$300.
- Apply for a Neighborhood Matching Grant for signage to promote community facilities, events and other information. To receive a sign permit, contact the City of Charlotte Zoning Enforcement at (704) 336-7600 or pick up a form at the Hal Marshall Building, 700 North Tryon Street, Charlotte, NC 28202.
- Advertise community updates or events at local businesses, churches, or other establishments where permitted. Contact Zoning Enforcement at (704) 336-7600 for any questions regarding advertisements.

## Helpful Strategies and Resources

Strategies	Related Resources
Improve Communication	<p><b>Phonevite</b>- Free phone tree service, limited to 25 recipients and only 2 calls every 30 days <a href="http://www.phonevite.com/">http://www.phonevite.com/</a></p> <p><b>Free Conference Line</b>- <a href="http://www.freeconferencecall.com">www.freeconferencecall.com</a></p> <p><b>Nextdoor</b>- Create a private social network for your neighborhood and use it to: share used items, organize, communicate, etc. <a href="https://nextdoor.com/about_us/">https://nextdoor.com/about_us/</a></p> <p><b>FastSigns® Reusable Yard Signs</b>- <a href="http://www.fastsigns.com/sg-yard-signs/Yard-Signs">http://www.fastsigns.com/sg-yard-signs/Yard-Signs</a></p> <p><b>Charlotte Neighborhood Matching Grants</b>- fund eligible neighborhood improvements such as signage, cleanups, landscape projects, and more at <a href="http://tinyurl.com/c2vglsj">http://tinyurl.com/c2vglsj</a></p> <p><b>Mail Chimp</b>- Free online newsletter creator <a href="http://www.mailchimp.com">www.mailchimp.com</a></p> <p><b>Weebly and yola and neighborhoodlink</b> are free website creators</p>

## Additional Sustainability Resources

**Center for Science in the Public Interest-** Information on chemicals in foods and other products and how best to avoid them <http://www.cspinet.org>

**Central Piedmont Community College (CPCC) Center for Sustainability-** <http://www.cpcc.edu/cfs>

**Charlotte Clean and Green Festival-** Yearly sustainability festival and more [www.charlottecleanandgreen.com](http://www.charlottecleanandgreen.com)

**Charlotte Green Team-** Improving the environment through sustainable events [www.charlottegreanteam.com](http://www.charlottegreanteam.com)

**Discovery Channel's Planet Green-** Advice on sustainable living <http://planetgreen.discovery.com/>

**Do Your Part-** Tips for everyday green living <http://www.doyourpart.com>

**Do Your Part Home Checklist-** Ideas for reducing waste, energy, water use, and pollution in every possible area of your home <http://doyourpart.com/green-living/book/room-by-room-checklist/>

**Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)-** Information on topics from water pollution to bed bugs <http://www.epa.gov/>

**EPA Design for the Environment (DfE) Program-** The EPA's DfE labels on products indicate that its ingredients pose the least concern for human and environmental health [www.epa.gov/dfc](http://www.epa.gov/dfc)

**EPA Grant Resources-** Links, help, and advice on sustainability grants <http://www.epa.gov/epahome/grants.htm>

**Environmental Working Group-** Find out information on chemicals in consumer products and on which products are good and bad for you and for sustainability <http://www.ewg.org>

**Mecklenburg County State of the Environment Report-** <http://tinyurl.com/bq58r8c>

**Pocket Neighborhoods-** Creating small scale community in a large scale world. Tips for creating community <http://www.pocket-neighborhoods.net/blog/>

**Practically Green-** Measure and track your "green" actions; compete with friends to see who can become the "greenest" [www.practicallygreen.com](http://www.practicallygreen.com)

**Soy Products Guide-** Soy is a renewable alternative to petroleum <http://www.unitedsoybean.org/resources/tools/soy-products-guide/>

**Sustain Charlotte-** Helping create a region in which everyone has the knowledge, resources and opportunity to make choices with a clear awareness of their combined social, economic and environmental impacts <http://www.sustaincharlotte.org>

**The City's Quality of Life Study-** <http://tinyurl.com/34a4cgz>

**The Green Living Handbook, by David Gershon, 2008-** Do-it-yourself actions for improving household efficiency and reducing consumption. Check out his other books as well, including Livable Neighborhood [http://www.empowermentinstitute.net/files/Order\\_page.html](http://www.empowermentinstitute.net/files/Order_page.html)

**UNCC's IDEAS Center-** <http://ideas.uncc.edu/>

**U.S. Green Building Council Green Home Guidelines-** [http://www.usgbccrc.org/resource/resmgr/docs/green\\_building\\_summary\\_usgbc.pdf](http://www.usgbccrc.org/resource/resmgr/docs/green_building_summary_usgbc.pdf)

**U.S. Green Building Council Resources-** <http://www.usgbccrc.org/?page=Links>

**A little space for additional goals, thoughts, notes and ideas**

# Appendix: Sustainable Vision Plan Visioning Notes

## Energy

- **Save money on utility bills (2)**
- **Reduce energy use**
- Make sure the lights are out (5)
- Find alternative activities (4)
- Educate (3)
- Unplug appliances (3)
- Watch less tv/turn off tv (3)
- Hang dry clothes (2)
- Track use
- Use less
- Disseminate information
- Create contests around energy reduction
- Use a Laundromat
- Add new windows
- Use energy efficient bulbs

## Food

- **Community garden (3)**
- **Grow your own garden (2)**
- **Increase entrepreneurial opportunities**
- **Open a new food industry business**
- Buy in bulk (2)
- Increase knowledge of community garden benefits
- Deliver food
- Distribute recipes
- Eat less junk

## Open Spaces and Parks

- **Use park more**
- **Plant more trees**
- More involvement with youth recreation activities
- **Use space for education**
- **Create teen club center**
- Have a festival (3)
- Plan more activities (2)
- Create partnerships to create activities (2)

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## Transportation

- **Reduce dependence on vehicles**
- Walk (6)
- Ride bikes (5)
- Ride CATS (4)
- Carpool (3)
- Utilize school bus
- Reduce buss pass cost for those who practice green
- Consolidate errands

## Waste

- **Increase recycling participation (2)**
- Recycle more paper and plastic (3)
- Educate (3)
- Workshops about composting
- Provide appropriate bins
- Encourage others to reduce waste
- Have more neighborhood cleanups
- Give prizes and rewards to recognize work
- Donate unused items for resale
- Give scraps to dog

## Water

- **Save water (3)**
- **Clean water (2)**
- Provide tips to save (2)
- Turn water off (2)
- Turn off faucet when brushing (2)
- Short showers (2)
- Track usage
- Rain barrels
- Take fewer showers
- Don't use water hose
- Save when flushing
- No long baths
- Distribute reusable water bottles
- Limit the number of times you do laundry per week

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- Hang laundry outside strategy
- Use dishwasher once per week strategy
- Water yard less strategy
- Efficient Shower Heads strategy

\*The numbers in () indicate the number of times comments were made by community members.