

Educating and Engaging the Community.

Below is an overview of several public education campaigns and activities that are currently in place in communities across the United States. They are designed to increase the environmental literacy of the community and to demonstrate the environmental commitment of the local government.

1. Display the Green Pact, or other environmental pledge taken by the community, in a public place. This demonstrates to the community the commitment made by its government to sustainability. It will also serve to remind the signatories of the pact of their responsibilities to the community and to the environment.
2. Recognize residents and businesses in the community that have shown leadership and commitment in the area of environmental protection by granting “*Environmental Excellence Awards*” annually.
3. Appoint a spokesperson who is charged with updating the community regularly such as at public meetings. Consider publicly tracking progress and milestones.
4. Raise environmental awareness through a community newsletter. Include a regular column on the progress of the sustainability plan, Green Pact, or other commitment. Consider sharing tips on how residents can help the community reach its green goals. Tap into the Valley's many resource agencies for guest articles.
5. Enlist the help of local media to help spread the word about the community's sustainability plan.
6. Include the *State of the Environment* in the annual state of the city/county/township report.
7. Host town hall meetings or workshops on timely topics that target behavior changes in the community. Partner with other communities and resource agencies for these events. Some topics to consider:
 - decentralized storm water management; rain gardens and rain barrels
 - benefits of composting
 - proper maintenance of septic systems
 - home energy audits and energy efficiency
 - alternative energy resources
 - building a backyard wildlife habitat
 - environmentally safe cleaning products
 - greening the neighborhoods
 - community gardens, farmers markets, and local foods
 - green lawns and landscaping

8. Celebrate the steps that community has already taken towards environmental sustainability. Consider assembling a sustainability plan to layout future environment-enhancing goals of the government entity.
9. Coordinate with resource agencies to organize special events in your community. Consider events like *“Bike to School Day,”* or bring focus to an existing special event such as *“America Recycles Day.”*
10. Launch a public education campaign targeting a local environmental issue. Consider a *“Waste Awareness Week,”* modeled after a California program that helps consumers become aware of the amount and type of waste they personally throw away. Other campaigns include: excess packaging education, reduce unwanted junk mail, creating an environmentally safe home, or going green with landscaping and lawns.
11. Neighborhood associations exist in almost every community. Communicate your sustainability goals to them and enlist their assistance.
12. Add a sustainability page to your community’s website and update it regularly.
13. Coordinate with schools. School groups, classes, and teachers may be eager to assist your community in becoming green and healthy. Here are a few ideas:
 - Many school districts will be building new facilities. Share resources such as www.greenschools.net to assist in building these facilities green and healthy.
 - Host a roundtable discussion that will bring together the farming community and school districts to promote the procurement of local foods.
 - Help to start a school recycling program if one does not exist.
 - Help to break ground on a school garden or land lab.
 - Reduce carbon footprint through school energy audits.
 - Investigate opportunities to enhance school transportation.
 - School bus diesel retrofitting
 - Perform walkability audits and identify opportunities to enhance safe routes to school.
 - Organize a “bike to school day”
 - Reforest school property.
14. Team up with civic groups for special sustainability projects. The project may involve the planting of native trees on public lands for example, or building bluebird or bat boxes in suitable areas to boost habitat.
15. Demonstration projects are a good way to introduce the public to a new idea and to show the community that its government is open to new ideas. Additionally, a successful demonstration project can bolster the community’s sense of pride. Try installing a permeable parking lot or a rain garden on public property. Broadcast to the community the benefits of the project.

16. Grand Opening Ceremonies – Take the opportunity during grand opening ceremonies and ribbon cuttings to salute the green aspects of the project or the new business.
17. Team up with the public health community to highlight public health benefits of sustainable actions. Tout the health benefits of adding side walks in the community for example.
18. Apply for awards that congratulate communities for their advances in environmental stewardship and public health. Publicize their granting.
19. Publish the results of energy audits that are performed on public buildings; and highlight the steps that will be taken to reduce the entity's carbon footprint.
20. Highlight the environmental and public health benefits of community projects. Refer to the PACE EH *Land Use and Community Design Rating Sheet* for guidance.
21. Develop a Resource Guide for Buying Wisely in your community. Meadville, PA has such a document that serves as a consumers guide to shopping in a green and local way. See the document at <http://www.newdream.org/buyingwisely/>
22. Offer support to your community's farmers' market and community gardens. If your community does not have a farmers' market or community garden investigate establishing one.
23. Participate in regional initiatives that aim to enhance the environment. Inform the community about the initiative, your involvement, and the expected benefits to the community. Mahoning River Restoration Project, Brownfield Restoration, Farmland Preservation are just a few examples.
24. Comprehensive and community planning is a great way to actively involve residents and businesses in planning for the future growth and stability of your community. Your plan will establish community priorities that may touch on natural resource preservation, multi-modal transportation systems (bike paths, sidewalks, public transit), and other aspects of establishing a healthy, active-living community.

LAND USE AND COMMUNITY DESIGN RATING SHEET

Investing time, attention, and resources in *healthy* development of new subdivisions or restoring community and vitality to aging cities and older suburbs encourages sustainable growth. Promoting healthy sustainable growth patterns contributes to the health and overall quality of life in our communities.

Health impacts from land use design and community development include obesity, asthma, injuries, physical inactivity, and social equity. Healthy designs add quality and value to development buyers and community leaders prefer.

This **Land Use and Community Design Rating Sheet** is a *Health Impact Assessment (HIA)* tool that provides an approach for rating the health impacts of land use design and community development practices.

RATE YOUR PROJECT'S HEALTH

Please circle the appropriate answer (Y or N) for items incorporated into your design.
(___ Yes / 44 Choices)

HEALTH IMPACT

<p><i>Walkable Environment in Development</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Sidewalks or trails ▪ Handicap accessible 	Y	N	<p><i>Bikable Environment</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Bike lanes, paths, or trails ▪ Access to bike network 	Y	N
<p><i>Walkable or Bikable Access to:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Businesses ▪ Parks, trails, or playgrounds 	Y	N	<p><i>Green Space in Development</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Playground or recreation areas ▪ Natural Areas 	Y	N
<p><i>Close Proximity (½ mile) to physical activity</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Pools, lakes, or trails ▪ Fitness Centers 	Y	N	<p><i>Close Proximity (within ½ mile) to:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Work, Schools or Retail Businesses ▪ Grocery Stores, Libraries, Churches 	Y	N

LAND USE IMPACT

<p><i>Community Design</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Revitalization of infrastructure ▪ Access to public utilities ▪ Mixed housing, commercial, & retail ▪ Incorporates open space ▪ Minimize excess use of lighting 	Y	N	<p><i>Subdivision Design</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Cluster lot layouts ▪ Mixed land use with features to promote physical activity (recreation areas/sidewalks) ▪ Conserves green space ▪ Access to green space ▪ Access to recreation areas ▪ Adequate lighting for safety ▪ Limited Impermeable Surfaces 	Y	N
<p><i>Lot Design</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Incorporates natural existing land features ▪ Utilize Best Management Practice (septic, well, sewer placement, and construction related activities) 	Y	N	<p><i>Environmentally Sensitive Areas</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Protect Wetlands, Streams, Floodplains ▪ Minimize stream impacts ▪ Minimize loss of trees and/or habitats 	Y	N

WATER QUALITY IMPACT

<p><i>Stormwater (Pre & During Construction)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWP³) ▪ Riparian Setbacks Designated ▪ Implement SWP³ ▪ Implement Erosion & Sediment Control Measures 	Y	N	<p><i>Stormwater (Post-construction)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Convert sedimentation pond to flood control pond ▪ Re-vegetate disturbed areas with non-invasive species 	Y	N
<p><i>Wastewater</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Access to sanitary sewers ▪ On-lot Septic Systems 	Y	N	<p><i>Drinking Water</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Access to public water lines ▪ Licensed Well Drilling Contractor ▪ Source water protection 	Y	N

AIR QUALITY IMPACT

<p><i>Transportation</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Access to public transit ▪ Walkable, bikable options 	Y	N	<p><i>Construction</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Dust suppression ▪ Phased activity to minimize soil exposure 	Y	N
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