

**F.O.C.U.S. GREATER SYRACUSE**  
 Forging Our Community's United Strength  
*Citizens' Action Plan for a Sustainable Community*  
*August 2005*

The attached “ACTION PLAN FOR A SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY” is a work in progress - a roadmap for action that will continue to be refined, updated, and communicated. The plan consists of recommendations gathered by over 50 citizens who shared their ideas and expertise at facilitated sessions convened by F.O.C.U.S. Recommendations identify current and potential champions and human and financial resources.

**THE STUDY INCLUDES:**

- **Definition:** “A thriving, sustainable community is a place that provides a safe, healthy, high quality of life for current and future generations, incorporating a comprehensive approach to economic vitality, social equity, and environmental stewardship”.
- **Challenge:** To build a thriving, sustainable community by integrating the efforts of citizens, educational institutions, businesses and government.

**OVERALL THEMES:**

- Citizens, governments, businesses and educational institutions have a major stake in the future sustainability of our community.
- Success will be achieved through collaboration, cooperation, and communication.
- Individuals play an important role. Everyone, children and adults, needs to become aware of the ways to make our community sustainable and understand the consequences of doing nothing.
- Planning is a key ingredient including benchmarks, timelines, actions, and monitoring.

**F.O.C.U.S. PLANNING PROCESS:**

- Basic fact-finding, gaining knowledge, research for 12 months and continuing.
- Monthly presentations at F.O.C.U.S Core Group sessions featuring “How We Make Our Community Livable and Sustainable”.
- F.O.C.U.S. community-wide event “I Love CNY...F.O.C.U.S on BUILDING A LIVABLE- SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY” reached over 450 attendees. Program participants spoke on behalf of business, government, academia, environment, workforce, media, and youth. There were 20 exhibits representing economic, environmental, and equity displays. The afternoon “Conversation with the Experts” attracted 100 participants.
- Think Tank planning sessions involved 40-50 people at each session representing non-profit organizations, engineering and architectural firms, planning agencies, colleges and universities, citizen advocates, F.O.C.U.S. volunteers, and government agencies. The sessions resulted in the attached document, “Citizens’ Action Plan for a Sustainable Community”.

**F.O.C.U.S. - WHO WE ARE:**

*F.O.C.U.S. Greater Syracuse is a citizen-driven organization that impacts change in Central New York by enabling citizens, organizations, and government to work together to enhance the quality of our lives and our economic future.*

**F.O.C.U.S. STRATEGIES – WHAT WE DO:**

*The F.O.C.U.S. community wide visioning produced 15,000 ideas and 87 goals to improve the area. These goals are a citizen directive for action. To advance these goals, F.O.C.U.S. partners with government, organizations, business, and the community at large in the following ways:*

- **Convening** groups around a common goal - identifying human and financial resources
- **Communicating** messages, reports, monthly activities, and surveys
- **Serving as a catalyst and facilitator**
- **Providing a clearinghouse and database** of trends, ideas, tools, and solutions
- **Championing** ideas and solutions that benefit all citizens
- **Celebrating** successes and helping to create them

*Please review the complete report and send us your comments or questions via telephone 448-8732 or e-mail [focus@ci.syracuse.ny.us](mailto:focus@ci.syracuse.ny.us). Let us know if you want to be advised of or involved in future F.O.C.U.S. activities. See report on web site: [focussyracuse.org](http://focussyracuse.org)*

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**CHALLENGE:** To build a thriving, sustainable community by integrating the efforts of citizens, educational institutions, businesses and Government.

Recommendation: WHAT CAN FOCUS DO?	Strategies	Resources Champions  (Key to abbreviations, Appendix A)	IMPACTS		
			Economic Vitality	Social Equity	Environmental Stewardship
<b>Convene</b>	1. Convene Chambers of Commerce, Rotaries, realtors, religious institutions, regional college presidents other civic and related groups, to speak to sustainability issues.	Syracuse University, Cornell, LeMoyne, Upstate Medical University, SUNY/ESF, OCC, Cortland, Oswego, Binghamton, Hamilton, Colgate, SUNY Morrisville colleges; Chambers of Commerce; Rotary Clubs; Lions Clubs; MACNY; MDA; CVB; CNY Realtors; Interreligious Council; Gamaliel; Rabbinical Council; Ministers Alliance; Syracuse 20/20; Businesses, and others.			
	2. Collaborate with other entities in the region regarding sustainable efforts.	Tompkins, Auburn, Rochester, Cortland, Cornell Cooperative Extension, Greening USA, city, county, town and village governments.			

Recommendation: WHAT CAN FOCUS DO?	Strategies	Resources Champions (Key to abbreviations, Appendix A)	IMPACTS		
			Economic Vitality	Social Equity	Environmental Stewardship
<b>Communicate/Educate</b>	1. Publish plan, develop goals, and keep sustainability visible.	FOCUS Newsletter, volunteers.			
	2. Utilize the Focus/ SU /City of Syracuse <i>Citizens Academy</i> to discuss sustainability.	FOCUS, University College/SU, City, Mayor, Common Council, Core Group, TNT, media, citizens.			
	3. Encourage speakers groups, slide shows, blogs, community bulletin board, letters to the editor, and links to web sites, to inform, excite and elicit awareness for seniors, youth, families, young people, employees, decision makers.	FOCUS volunteers, professional designers, and media.			
<b>Catalyst</b>	1. Be an agent to bring together plans, goals, and the ideas of different groups to advocate for bike and walking tours, workplace policies, official ordinances, regulations, and curriculum.	Community organizations, businesses, and economic development organizations, government, school and college administrators.			
	2. Support regional GIS mapping capacity.	City, County, region, SOCPA, economic development organizations, SU Urban Geographer, SUNY/ESF.			
	3. Work for greater collaboration within region, support resolutions, advocate for and support development of goals with measures. Monitor and communicate progress.	Mayors, County Executives, Legislators, Common Councilors, Economic Development organizations, Environmental organizations and social agencies.			
<b>Clearinghouse</b>	1. Collect data and reports of regional activities related to sustainability.	FOCUS, Environmental leaders, Greening USA.			
	2. Maintain reference library of articles, books, CDs, web sites.	FOCUS, public library, Post Standard, TV and radio stations.			
<b>Celebrator</b>	1. Celebrate success and report to the community.	FOCUS, community groups, and government.			

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Recommendation WHAT CAN CITIZENS DO?	Strategies	Resources Champions	IMPACTS		
			Economic Vitality	Social Equity	Environmenta
<b>1. At the Workplace</b>	1. Patronize businesses that have sustainable policies. Encourage all employers to create sustainable policies.	Bristol-Myers Squibb, Honeywell, Chamber of Commerce, others.			
	2. Employee organizations sponsor speakers and events about sustainability & personal responsibility.	Trade Unions, Human Resource Managers.			
	3. Write about sustainability in company newsletters.	Corporate Newsletter editors, labor unions.			
	4. Reduce reliance on automobile. Use bus or bike to travel to work.	Workers, Employee Wellness Committees, SMTC.			
<b>2. At Home</b>	1. Shift to renewable energy sources.	NIMO, energy companies for centralized renewable options; builders and home improvement stores that can provide local options like geothermal energy systems, solar panels for homes and solar outdoor lighting.			
	2. Reduce energy consumption – consider fuel efficiency of vehicles in purchase decisions, consider energy efficiency ratings of new appliances, conduct a home	Car dealerships (e.g. hybrid cars), NIMO, home improvement stores.			

			IMPACTS		
	energy survey to spot and address energy waste (e.g. cost-effective insulation opportunities, holes that can be caulked to eliminate drafts, etc.).				
	2. Be a steward/model for your family use recyclable products, buy local goods, discuss how to be responsible citizens, find ways to reuse supplies, compost, keep yard clean and green, plant trees, landscape.	Everyone, OCRRA, DPW.			
<b>3. In the Neighborhood</b>	1. Involve neighborhood groups to improve neighborhoods, hold educational forums, and reward success.	Everyone, TNT, Neighborhood, SUN, landlords, Community Development, Neighborhood Watch.			
	2. Walk more for health and sustainability.	All families.			
<b>4. In the Community</b>	1. Increase local pride.	FOCUS, Everyone.			
	2. Be informed; Ask questions; voice opinions based on knowledge, recognize and appreciate value of culture, housing, neighborhoods, green buildings, clean air, etc., research articles and books.	Citizens' Academy, media, Center of Excellence, Home Headquarters, architectural firms, engineering companies, cultural institutions, libraries.			
	3 Know the importance of land use planning, zoning processes, urban and suburban design.	SOCPA, SMTC, zoning departments, Citizens' Academy, City, County, Village and Town planning and zoning boards.			
	4. Enhance projects in schools and civic groups. Join Community Wide Dialogue to Eliminate Racism, expand Urban Delight program, and join Community Supported Agriculture (CSA).	Greening USA, Lions, Rotary, Cornell Cooperative Extension, Sierra Club, Nature Conservancy, IRC, Jubilee Homes, ENIP, Boy/Girl Scouts etc.			

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<b>Recommendation WHAT CAN EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS DO?</b>	<b>Strategies</b>	<b>Resources Champions</b>	<b>IMPACTS</b>		
			<b>Economic Vitality</b>	<b>Social Equity</b>	<b>Environmental Stewardship</b>
<b>1. Teach, inform and disseminate</b>	1. Include sustainability in curriculum at all levels of education.	NYState Department of Education, Schools, colleges, BOCES, adult education programs.			
	2. Libraries offer book reviews on sustainability. Print, electronic, broadcast medium provide informative articles and programs.	Onondaga County Public Library system, Post Standard, Eagle Newspapers, Syracuse New Times.			
	3. Create a community wide educational plan on sustainability.	Colleges, Universities, City and county School Administrators, parents, students, Government.			
	4. Challenge and support the community on sustainable planning.	Colleges and University Leaders.			
<b>2. Involve students, parents and teachers.</b>	1. Involve students, parents and teachers in conservation projects as interns, as student teachers, as volunteers, as experts.	Schools, civic organizations, MOST. Colleges.			
	2. Organize school clubs about sustainable topics.	Teachers, Students and parents.			
	3. Organize "Service Learning Projects."	NYS Dept. of Education, U.S. Dept. Education, local schools, colleges & universities.			

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Recommendation WHAT CAN BUSINESSES DO?	Strategies	Resources Champions	IMPACTS		
			Economic Vital	Social Equity	Environmenta Stewardship
<b>1. Create a sustainable plan and implement, and monitor it.</b>	1. Consult with businesses that have successful models.	Bristol-Myers Squibb.			
	2. Involve employees.	Unions, Human Resources.			
	3. Integrate economic development, social equity, and environment.	Business Leaders.			
	4. Develop and communicate models for green building construction.	Green Building Council, GreeningUSA, NYS Fair, Zoo.			
	5. Increase recycling throughout workplaces, construction sites & other businesses.	OCRRA, construction companies, business & mall owners.			
<b>2. Encourage use of alternate modes of transportation</b>	1. Provide more spaces to park bicycles.	Chamber of Commerce, MDA, SMTC, Government, Developers and Building owners.			
	2. Encourage use of public transportation.	CENTRO, SMTC, Government			
	3. Sponsor bike/walk to work days.	Chamber of Commerce , MDA, SMTC, Employee organizations.			
<b>4. Educate work force about sustainability</b>	1. Conduct educational forums at lunch breaks.	Employee Organizations, Chamber of Commerce.			
	2. Include articles about sustainability in company Newsletter	Corporate Newsletter Editors			

<b>Recommendation WHAT CAN BUSINESSES DO?</b>	<b>Strategies</b>	<b>Resources Champions</b>	<b>IMPACTS</b>		
			<b>Economic Vitality</b>	<b>Social Equity</b>	<b>Environmental Stewardship</b>
	3. Awards programs for special efforts.	Chamber of Commerce, Governments, F.O.C.U.S.			
<b>5. Cooperate, collaborate, initiate with government and citizen groups</b>	1. Sponsor community/ neighborhood programs, events, projects with volunteers, funding, and in-kind contributions.	Businesses, Foundations, Chamber of Commerce, TNT, neighborhood groups.			
	2 Work together with other businesses, government, & neighborhood groups.	MACNY, MDA, Chamber of Commerce, Government, TNT, neighborhood groups.			

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Recommendation WHAT CAN GOVERNMENTS DO?	Strategies	Resources Champions	IMPACTS		
			Economic Vitality	Social Equity	Environmental Stewardship
<b>1. Create sustainability plans for all levels of government operations</b>	1. Governments should be exemplary models of sustainability and communicate their efforts to the citizens, for example, installing alternative energy resources, energy saving devices in all government facilities.	City, County, Towns and Villages.			
	2. Governments should integrate sustainability criteria with City Comprehensive Plan, County’s Settlement Plan, New York State’s 2015 plan, County Aging & Youth 2015 Plan, FOCUS goals, Duany/New Urbanism and other plans.	City ,Common Council members, County, Legislators, Citizens, FOCUS, Office of Aging & Youth, SOCPA.			
	3. Involve City, County, Towns and Villages in all sustainability decisions. Reach out to Town and Village Planning and Zoning Boards.	Mayor, County Executive, Common Council, Legislature, Town Supervisors, Village Mayors, planning and zoning boards.			
	4. Improve , increase and utilize, mass transit.	Government, CENTRO, SMTC.			
	5. Require landscaping for surface parking lots.	City, County, Legislature, Common Council.			
	6. Improve/ sidewalks, build new ones.	City and suburbs.			
	7. Offer sustainability tax credits.	Federal, State, Local governments.			
	8. Include citizens of all ages in planning.	Everyone			
<b>2. Monitor, enforce, reward</b>	1. Reward good, green businesses.	City, county, villages, towns			
	2. Publish enforcement reports, highlight good companies/groups.	Electronic, print, broadcast media			

**IMPACTS**

<b>Recommendation</b> WHAT CAN <b>GOVERNMENTS</b> DO?	<b>Strategies</b>	<b>Resources</b> <b>Champions</b>	<b>IMPACTS</b>		
			Economic Vitality	Social Equity	Environmental Stewardship
<b>3. Initiate and Facilitate projects</b>	1. Develop light rail system.	Regional Government.			
	2. Remove Rte 81 through City.	New York State, SMTC, local governments, citizens, Syracuse University.			
	3. Increase number of OCRRA 'Earth Days'.	OCRRA, citizens.			
	4. Convert vacant lots into parks and green spaces.	Cornell Coop. Extension, SUN, TNT, City of Syracuse.			
	5. Provide safe bicycling corridors.	Local governments.			

**LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS – in order of appearance**

- F.O.C.U.S.            Forging Our Community's United Strength
- CNY                    Central New York
- SU                     Syracuse University
- SUNY                 State University of New York
- ESF                    Environmental Science & Forestry
- OCC                    Onondaga Community College
- MACNY                Manufacturers Association of Central New York
- MDA                    Metropolitan Development Association

CVB	Convention & Visitors Bureau
TNT	Tomorrows Neighborhoods Today
GIS	Geographic Information System
SOCPA	Syracuse Onondaga County Planning Agency
SMTC	Syracuse Metropolitan Transportation Council
ENIP	Eastside Neighbors in Partnership
IRC	Interreligious Council
BOCES	Board of Cooperative Educational Services
NYS	New York State
MOST	Museum of Science & Technology
OCRRA	Onondaga County Resource Recovery Agency
CENTRO	Central New York Regional Transportation Authority (CNYRTA)
SUN	Syracuse United Neighbors