

# SUSTAINABILITY PLAN



**Northeast Ohio  
Regional Sewer District**

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## SECTION 1

# A PLAN WITH A PURPOSE

Northeast Ohio Regional Sewer District employees hold environmental stewardship, accountability, and a progressive culture as core values. By ensuring clean and safe water resources, we contribute to the viability of the communities we serve and protect public health.

Employees, whether you're just learning about sustainability or involved in the Sustainability Employee Resource Group, this plan will clarify what sustainability means at the District, highlight effective practices to implement, and identify areas for additional focus, research, and analysis.

Customers, partners and suppliers, and anyone else curious about our sustainability efforts, you'll find information about how this plan will impact you in section nine.



*Water Quality and Industrial Surveillance staff sample water at Edgewater Beach to determine water quality for swimmers*

## SECTION 2

# A STATEMENT FROM OUR CEO

We provide sanitary and stormwater-management services to Cleveland and 61 surrounding communities 24/7, 365 days a year. Our work protects public health and the environment, and what we do today has a profound impact on the future of our rivers, streams, and Great Lake.



Clean water utilities like the District face complex challenges including aging infrastructure, higher levels of impervious surfaces, rising costs, and the impacts of climate change, including more intense rain. Sustainability or the use of natural, community, and utility resources in a manner that satisfies current needs without compromising future needs, helps us conserve resources, save money, and be better situated to excel in a changing world.

This plan charts a strategic path forward to greater sustainability. It clarifies what sustainability means for us, highlights effective practices to implement, and assesses our progress.

This first sustainability plan comes two years after we commemorated the 50-year anniversary of the 1969 Cuyahoga River fire. Our regional progress over the last half century is a testament to our work, and our sustainability plan lays out tangible steps to increase efficiency, reduce waste, and enhance quality of life in Northeast Ohio.

I'm proud of our efforts to keep our Great Lake great and look forward to seeing the impact of our collective action.

**Kyle Dreyfuss-Wells**  
*Chief Executive Officer*

## SECTION 3

# WHAT IS SUSTAINABILITY?

### *What does Sustainability mean?*

“Meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs” is a common definition of sustainability. This definition was first included in a report on Environment and Development to the United Nations in 1987.

### *What does Sustainability mean for us?*

In 2019, we defined what sustainability means for us as a Sewer District by creating sustainability principles. These principles capture our shared understanding, showcase areas of alignment, and explain how we at the District can make an impact.

## NEORSD Sustainability Principles

- Make informed decisions that keep sustainability in mind.
- Be efficient and seek opportunities to reduce waste and energy usage.
- Seek co-benefits, collaborate, and plan for the long-term recognizing the impacts of climate change, changing rainfall patterns and aging infrastructure.
- Optimize the function and resiliency of the Regional Stormwater System by maintaining or improving water quality and reducing stormwater flooding and erosion along the regional stormwater network.
- Promote diversity, equity, inclusion, innovation, and wellness both within District operations and the service area.
- Find opportunities to share our story and provide progress updates.

## What does sustainability look like at the District? Here are examples of these principles in action.

### **Make informed decisions that keep sustainability in mind**

#### *Southerly Savings*

Updates at Southerly have reduced ferric chloride usage by over 60% with an annual savings of around \$115,000. In 2017, Engineering & Construction and Operation and Maintenance staff reviewed ferric chloride usage at our Southerly plant and saw an opportunity to reduce chemical usage throughout the plant. For instance, installing new ferric chloride metering pumps (pictured) allowed for more accurate dosing.



*Southerly Ferric Chloride Pumps allow for accurate dosing*

### **Be efficient and seek opportunities to reduce waste and energy usage**

#### *Waste Reduction Grows Healthier Plants*

In 2015, the District teamed with neighboring Natural Resources and Sustainability Management Firm, Kurtz Brothers to research ash reuse. Tests revealed the ash did not pose an environmental risk and had a benefit: grass grown in topsoil and phosphorus-rich incinerator ash was fuller and taller than the control sample. As a result of this study, the District piloted ash reuse. Under a new Biosolids Incinerator Ash (BIA) Program Management contract, from 2018-2020, the District kept over 75,000 tons of ash out of the landfill, saved over \$900,000 in hauling and landfill fees, and eliminated greenhouse gas emissions from an 80+ mile transport. Now, ash from our wastewater treatment plants is reused in topsoil mixtures and construction aggregate.



*BIA test plots revealed fuller greener plants*



### *Conservation Saves*

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The District saved around 24 million kilowatt hours and shaved around a million dollars from its electricity budget by completing two large conservation projects and strategically replacing inefficient equipment. According to the US EPA's Greenhouse Gas Equivalencies Calculator, these projects to upgrade lighting, heating, cooling and ventilation systems, replace inefficient boilers, and optimize blowers is equal to eliminating the greenhouse gas emissions of driving a car 42 million miles.



*More efficient lighting in the Engineering & Construction Department*

**Seek co-benefits, collaborate, and plan for the long-term recognizing the impacts of climate change, changing rainfall patterns and aging infrastructure**

### *Creating Greenspace at Morgana Bluffs Nature Preserve*

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The District's Green Infrastructure Grants for the Combined Sewer Area Program helped to fund a 4.5-acre nature preserve and stormwater wetland created in partnership with the Boys and Girls Club of Cleveland and the West Creek Conservancy. The wetland reduced pressure on the combined sewer system during heavy rain events and created a green space with ADA-accessible trails (pictured) adjacent to a popular Boys & Girls Club in the Slavic Village neighborhood.



*Morgana Bluffs Nature Preserve 2018. Photo by the West Creek Conservancy and the Boys and Girls Club of Cleveland*

**Optimize the function and resiliency of the Regional Stormwater System by maintaining or improving water quality and reducing stormwater flooding and erosion along the regional stormwater network**

*Improving Water Quality and Creating Better Habitat*

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Rainbow darters and the pollution-sensitive mayflies, caddisflies, and stoneflies the fish eat are like us: they prefer clean water. In 2016, the District sponsored a \$2.4 million grant to Cleveland Metroparks to restore Euclid Creek within the former Acacia Country Club golf course. The project was within the Metroparks' newest park, the Acacia Reservation and included stream and floodplain restoration along Euclid Creek and removing existing drainage infrastructure to create wetlands. The project covered over 18 acres within the 155-acre park. It improves the water quality and quantity entering the headwaters of this urban stream. One way to see the impact of these improvements is to look for rainbow darters, their presence, and bright colors, are signs of a healthy stream.



*Euclid Creek Restoration, Acacia Reservation*

Since 2005, the District has sponsored over 45 preservation and restoration projects through the Ohio EPA's Water Resource Restoration Sponsor Program.

**Promote diversity, equity, inclusion, innovation, and wellness both within District operations and throughout the service area**

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In 2019, Sustainability Employee Resource Group (SERG) members biked over 4,900 miles while participating in the 2019 Bike to Work Challenge. Since 2018, SERG has provided District employees the opportunity to share their expertise, develop leadership skills, learn new things, and take action to enhance the environment.



*Bike to Work Gear at GJM*

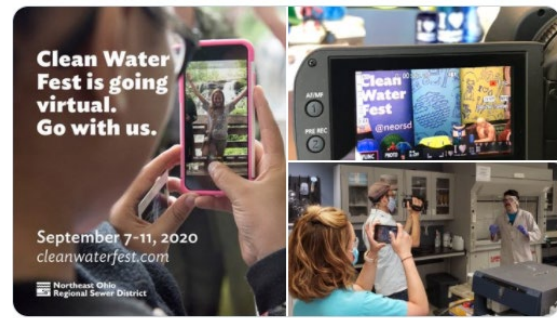


**Find opportunities to share our story and provide progress updates**

*Celebrating in your Pajamas!*

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In 2020, the District's Clean Water Fest went virtual. This gave customers a glimpse of the work it takes to keep our streams, rivers, and Great Lake great, from the comfort of their own homes. It also created an archive of videos and additional resources for future download and use by educators.



*Virtual Clean Water Fest 2020*

Typically, the District's annual Clean Water Festival is an educational and fun-filled experience with tours, live entertainment, exhibitors and thousands of guests. However, in 2020, due to the COVID-19 emergency, the District quickly adapted and changed their format to ensure safety and still provide plant visits, classroom friendly games, and interviews with our kid-favorite scientists Atom Beaker and Pete Reedish.



*Clean Water Fest 2019*



#### SECTION 4

## OUR VISION FOR THIS SUSTAINABILITY PLAN

Create a strategic, informed, and unified approach for tackling sustainability efforts, ensure individuals from across the organization understand what sustainability is and what we are doing about it, and use sustainability efforts to further our mission and vision.

### **Sustainability furthers our vision.**

Our vision is to be the environmental leader in enhancing quality of life in the region and protecting its water resources. Sustainability efforts bolster this vision by reminding us to consider the long-term impact of our decisions and leave things better than we find them. Sustainability is also about conservation, efficiency, and seeking co-benefits. It provides a useful lens to look at a broader picture as we consider alternatives and make decisions. Finally, we are living in a changing world, and a sustainability mindset helps us to understand and plan for aging

infrastructure, higher levels of impervious surfaces, water resource variability, and changing weather patterns.

### **Sustainability strengthens our mission.**

Sustainability is listed six times in our 2019-21 Strategic Plan. When individuals from across the organization can explain what sustainability is, what we're doing about it, and how it applies to their work, we'll move forward with greater clarity of purpose.

### **Sustainability enhances attraction and retention.**

In talking with management, many District employees and job candidates care about the environment, want to work at a mission-focused organization, and/or are impressed by the work we do. By enhancing sustainability efforts, we'll further appeal to those mission-driven individuals and better align our values with our actions.

### **Sustainability promotes effective utility management.**

Water utilities are tasked to protect public health and the environment, while providing affordable services to ratepayers. Sustainability practices help utilities like NEORSD plan for the future, set priorities, and continuously improve. Additionally, community sustainability and water resource sustainability are two attributes of an effectively managed utility, according to a broad coalition including the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, the National Association of Clean Water Agencies, the Water Environment Foundation, and the Water Research Foundation.



# SUSTAINABILITY PLAN FORMAT

This plan has been designed to explain what sustainability means at the District, highlight effective strategies to enhance sustainability efforts, collect data and assess our progress, and develop broad strategic goals for the future. It has been designed to be flexible, so we can adapt to changes, benefit from innovation, and further refine goals, once we have a better understanding of our environmental footprint.

This plan will focus the work of the Sustainability Manager on broad efforts to understand our baseline, set goals for improving resource management, and find opportunities to enhance the culture of sustainability at the District.

The Sustainability Principles, Progress & Goals section explains the purpose of each principle, highlights progress to date, and summarizes next steps. The six sustainability principles clarify how we define sustainability. They are unique to the District and highlight areas of internal alignment and focus. The progress updates illustrate that sustainability isn't a new concept and provide examples of District successes. The overarching goals are meant to provide a broad overview of what we'd like to accomplish, and the forty-plus objectives lay out the specific, measurable, and time-based details.

The Sustainability Implementation Plan is a companion document. It clarifies how we will reach our sustainability plan goals. It lays out the steps needed to achieve each objective, sets deadlines, highlights project leads, and lists necessary resources. The alignment sheets within the Sustainability Implementation Plan highlight areas of alignment with local, regional, and global sustainability efforts. In addition, the District will seek to align with future plans developed by organizational partners and state and federal government entities.

## Areas of Alignment with the NEORSD Sustainability Plan

- NEORSD Strategic Plan
- Cleveland Climate Action Plan 2018 Update
- The Cuyahoga County 2019 Climate Action Plan

- The United Nations 17 Sustainable Development Goals

Water utilities like the District can support local, regional, and world sustainability initiatives by using tactics contained in the “Effective Utility Management Primer” and “Moving Toward Sustainability: Sustainability and Effective Practices for Creating Your Water Utility Roadmap.” A 2017 collaboration between the U.S. EPA and ten water sector associations, the “Primer” provides a common framework for water sector systems to assess strengths and areas for improvement, set priorities, and measure progress through a process of continual improvement leading to long-term sustainability. Its companion piece, “Moving Toward Sustainability,” includes proven and effective practices to improve operations and enhance sustainability. Exhibit 2: Sustainability Plan Alignment on pages 41 and 42 notes alignment with our strategic plan, effective utility management, and local, regional and world sustainability initiatives.

#### Areas of Alignment with Proven Water Utility Practices

- The Effective Utility Management Primer
- Moving Toward Sustainability: Sustainability and Effective Practices for Creating Your Water Utility Roadmap

## SECTION 6

# SUSTAINABILITY PRINCIPLES, PROGRESS, & GOALS

## Make informed decisions keeping sustainability in mind.

Balanced and informed decision making is one of our core values. To make quality decisions, we need an understanding of our goals, objective metrics, and an analysis of options.



As a result of this plan, we'll be developing a clearer picture of our resource consumption, waste generation, and associated greenhouse gas emissions. We'll identify and evaluate proven practices to reduce emissions and focus reduction efforts on areas of high impact. We'll also gather information and seek perspective to better understand opportunities to collaborate with consultants, designers, and suppliers to reduce resource consumption, waste, and greenhouse gas emissions.

With expert insight and employee perspective, we'll find opportunities to further sustainability efforts and develop guidelines or checklists to aid in decision-making.

### PROGRESS TO DATE:

- In 2017, the District started a formal sustainability program.
- In 2018, the District produced its first Greenhouse Gas Emissions Inventory looking at emissions from 2014-16.
- In 2018, the District set-up an Energy Data Management System with the plan to develop a baseline for energy use, create regular energy reports, and track improvements in efficiency.



## GOALS:

- Aid decision making by developing a clearer picture of our utility usage and Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions.
- Gather information, gain perspective and highlight focus areas.

## OBJECTIVES:

- Create framework for consistent annual greenhouse gas reporting by Q3 2021.
- Produce updated District greenhouse gas reports by Q4 2021.
- Set a target for reducing District greenhouse gas emissions and develop an action plan for reaching that goal by Q2 2022.
- Enhance reporting platform to provide accurate and timely reports and dashboards for District-wide utility usage and trend analysis by Q4 2021.
- Sustainability manager to engage with and seek to understand the design process for District engineering projects to support collaboration beginning Q1 2021.
- Sustainability Manager partnering with Engineering & Construction Design Managers and Construction Managers to develop a sustainability checklist for use in design process by Q1 2023.
- Develop a sustainability checklist for watershed construction projects for use with goal setting and consultant engagement by Q2 2022.
- Assess the District's suppliers-vendors applicable sustainability efforts via survey by Q2 2021.
- Create NEORSD sustainable F guidelines by Q3 2022.
- Create a sustainability policy for Electronic Equipment by Q3 2021.
- Partner with Information Technology and Manager of Innovation Programs and individual departments to identify processes that generate the most paper and evaluate options for going paperless Q4 2021.
- Partner with Human Resources to survey awareness and interest in sustainability efforts by Q3 2021.

Be efficient and seek opportunities to reduce waste and energy usage.

Reducing waste and energy usage are key components of any sustainability strategy, as they can result in financial savings and/or reductions in GHG emissions. The Effective Utility Management Primer reinforces this idea that efficiently using water and energy resources are components of community sustainability.



### Analyzing pump efficiencies at the Euclid Creek Pump Station

Our 2014-2016 Greenhouse Gas Emissions Inventory highlights that most of the District's operational emissions come from electricity usage. Electricity is an integral part of our operations; thus, conservation and efficiency efforts are tools to reduce our emissions. Additionally, seeking opportunities to reduce waste and reduce energy usage are proven means to reduce costs.

PROGRESS TO DATE:

- Since 2014, the District reduced electricity usage by 16% and is on-target to reduce electricity usage by 23% by Q4 2021.
- Between 2017 and 2019 O&M, Fleet Services and Purchasing generated over \$250,000 in sales from bookshelves to vehicles on Government Deals, allowing for reuse of unneeded District Assets.
- Since 2018, the District has saved over 10 million kWh and over \$500,000 annually at Southerly WWTC by installing a higher efficiency first stage blower and changing the set-points on the second blower. Additionally, at Southerly WWTC, the Renewable Energy Facility (REF) team optimized maintenance and operations in the incineration and waste heat recovery/energy generation processes. Annually this will save the District \$150,000 for natural gas and \$100,000 for electricity.
- In 2018 the Engineering and Construction Department completed a project at the Easterly Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) to increase treatment capacity by 20%. In

addition to increasing the level of service, the project enhanced ferric chloride solution metering and pumping equipment. This reduced chemical usage at the plant. For instance, in 2018 and 2019 ferric chloride delivered decreased by over 30%.

- In the first six months of the 2019 Districtwide Energy Conservation Project, the District saved over 800,000 kWh and 5,600 MCF compared to the baseline year. That's over \$98,000 in energy savings.

#### GOALS:

- Reduce energy consumption.
- Reduce landfill waste.

#### OBJECTIVES:

- Reduce electricity usage at the District WWTPs and the George J. McMonagle Administration Building by 23% compared to 2014 baseline by Q1 2022.
- Develop District electric, natural gas, and water reduction goals by Q2 2022.
- Develop and implement plans for electricity reduction in accordance with defined Utility Reduction Goals by Q3 2022.
- Revisit and revise District Idling Policy by Q4 2021.
- Begin beneficially reusing grit from District WWTPs by Q3 2021.
- Start a composting pilot program at GJM (date TBD).
- Explore composting sediment removed by Stormwater Inspection & Maintenance (SWIM) from sediment-prone assets along the Regional Stormwater System (RSS), determine viability and next steps by Q4 2021.
- Pilot composting woody debris removed by SWIM from debris-prone assets along the RSS, determine viability, and next steps by Q4 2021.
- Pilot composting landscaping debris at select green infrastructure maintenance sites, evaluate the pilot process,



costs, etc. Work with SWIM to recommend guidance for composting landscaping debris at all District green infrastructure sites by Q1 2022.

- On an annual basis implement at least one idea to reduce waste at Clean Water Fest Q3 annually.
- Use waste data collected from Clean Water Fest activities to set waste reduction goals for future events by Q2 annually.

Seek co-benefits, collaborate, and plan for the long-term recognizing the impacts of climate change, changing rainfall patterns, and aging infrastructure.

Environmental stewardship is one of our core values. By continual improvement and being efficient, creative, and innovative, we will be better situated to overcome challenges such as aging infrastructure, changing weather patterns, and increasing mandates, and plan for the long-term needs of the communities we serve.

One way to do that is to seek projects with co-benefits, such as the Buckeye Road Green Infrastructure Site, which replaced four blocks of abandoned houses and businesses with interspersed public art and water quality messaging throughout green space designed to hold stormwater after heavy rains, reducing flooding and preventing combined sewer overflows. Within the three-acre site, the District planted over 275 trees. Healthy trees can absorb stormwater, provide homes, food, and shelter for wildlife, and provide shade. Additionally, these trees will help to regenerate the urban tree canopy in an area that is below the County average, with a 22% tree canopy compared to the Cuyahoga County average of 35% percent.

Another opportunity is to partner with external organizations, to leverage resources, share expertise, and uncover new ideas. We participate in a number of collaborative regional efforts like the Cleveland Tree Coalition



*Buckeye Road Green Infrastructure Site Ribbon Cutting, June 2019*

and Cuyahoga Greenway Partners, which seek to enhance sustainability and quality of life in the region. This helps us to see the broader picture, keep abreast of new developments, and understand potential areas for partnership.

Finally, it is critical to consider opportunities for adaptive reuse, this is the process of reusing existing infrastructure for a purpose other than it was designed. Reusing existing infrastructure on our design projects can help us to achieve value engineering savings and reduce the need for new virgin materials.

#### PROGRESS TO DATE:

- Procured 50% renewable electricity at Cleveland Electric Illuminating Company (CEI) sites starting in May 2019. From May 2019-May 2020 we purchased over 44,500,000 kWh of renewable energy which covers 35% of our total electricity usage. That's the equivalent of the annual electricity usage for 5,328 homes. This procurement is estimated to save the District \$2.2 million over the three years of the contract for electricity usage at Southerly WWTC, EMSC, GJM and 62 remote facilities.
- Green Infrastructure Grant projects completed between 2014-2019 reduce stormwater runoff by over 23 MG annually. The program provides organizations in the District's combined sewer area with funding for projects that remove or reduce stormwater from the combined sewer system and educate the public about the benefits of green infrastructure.
- In 2020, the Cleveland Tree Coalition, which includes the District, drafted a tree species selection guide for planting in Northeast Ohio, updated the Cleveland Tree Plan, and partnered to create a virtual Arbor Day Celebration for Northeast Ohio.
- As part of the District-wide Decommissioning Study (DECOM), completed in 2019, all facilities that were identified for decommissioning were evaluated for reuse potential including as offices or storage/light industrial space. At the Southerly WWTC 5 of the 8 facilities were not suitable for reuse, yet the three viable sites can provide up to 38,000 square feet of reusable space. At the Easterly WWTP all 4 facilities evaluated

were determined to have reuse potential providing up to 70,000 square feet of available facilities.

#### GOALS:

- Reduce climate impact of purchased electricity.
- Seek options for adaptive reuse.
- Engage with local sustainability efforts.

#### OBJECTIVES:

- Procure 50% or higher renewable electricity at CEI sites by Q2 2022.
- As staffing and/or storage/light industrial space needs are identified, the DECOM study final reports serve as a reference for the availability of on-site facilities, specifically at the Easterly WWTP.
- Conduct District Tree Inventory to assess trees, identify new sites to plant trees, and support tree canopy growth by Q4 2022.
- Continue support of Cleveland Tree Coalition to promote tree planting and efforts to grow green jobs and strengthen workforce development objectives through initiatives like the urban tree nursery pilot project.
- Continue to participate in Cuyahoga Greenway Partners to discover opportunities to connect our work creating and restoring wetlands, floodplains, and streams, with efforts to enhance foot and bike trails in Cuyahoga County.
- Investigate the Lights Out Cleveland program to reduce bird collisions and evaluate program participation by Q2 2021.



*Woodland Central Green Infrastructure Site Tour, September 2019*

Optimize the function and resiliency of the Regional Stormwater System by maintaining or improving water quality and reducing stormwater flooding and erosion along the regional stormwater network.



*Bonnie Park after District Stream Restoration*

The District was formed just a few years after the 1969 Cuyahoga River fire. At the time, industrial pollution was rampant, combined sewer overflows were common and the Cuyahoga River had no visible signs of life. Fast forward 50 years, and we've eliminated over four and a half billion gallons of raw sewage discharges to Lake Erie and the region's waterways and, through regional efforts, we can now safely eat fish caught in the Cuyahoga River.

The District's Water Quality and Industrial Surveillance division works to prevent pollution, and evaluate habitat and assess water quality, so that we can maintain or improve water quality.

In 2015, the Ohio Supreme Court affirmed the District's authority to implement a Regional Stormwater Management Program to address stream flooding, erosion, and water-quality issues related to stormwater runoff from hard surfaces. Managing stormwater flows is necessary to protect our natural resources, reduce streambank erosion, and decrease pollutants in streams and rivers. Stormwater-related problems must be addressed regionally, as what happens in one community can affect another. Often one community addresses a problem and inadvertently moves that problem downstream to the next community. If these issues are not addressed today, the problems will continue to worsen and will be more costly to solve in the future.

#### PROGRESS TO DATE:

- Since the start of Project Clean Lake in 2011, we've eliminated approximately one billion gallons of raw sewage discharge



annually, and an estimated total of approximately 5.5 billion gallons annually since the creation of the District in 1972.

- Since 2013, the Water Quality and Industrial Surveillance (WQIS) Illicit Discharge Detection and Elimination Program has prevented over approximately 3.2 million gallons per day of sewage and drinking water from going into the environment.
- In 2017, we created a stormwater goal setting framework to engage consultants and inform design and construction projects with the goal of reducing flooding and erosion while protecting water quality and improving physical structures.
- From 2018-2019, the District acquired over 50 acres of land and 15,000 linear feet of stream channel. These acquisitions were necessary to implement water resource projects such as demolitions of unsustainable development and restoring floodplains. These efforts are intended to reduce erosion, minimize damage caused by flooding, and improve water quality.
- In 2019 and 2020, the District completed three Stormwater Master Plans to identify problems and prioritize projects for the Stormwater Construction Plan, implement maintenance projects along the regional stormwater system, and support local partner projects.

#### GOALS:

- Better understand the regional stormwater system.
- Track resiliency efforts.

#### OBJECTIVES:

- Watersheds Programs Department to complete one additional stormwater master plan by Q4 2021.
- Partner with the Watersheds Programs Department to create a comprehensive list of pervious surface type alternatives and create a system to track green infrastructure implementation and annual pervious surface creation within District Properties by Q4 2021.

Promote diversity, equity, inclusion, innovation, and wellness both within District operations and the service area.



*Clean Water Fest Plant Tour, September 2019*

The social side of sustainability, including diversity, equity, inclusion, and wellness, is often overlooked. Yet, if we want to be a socially responsible utility, we need to consider the well-being of our staff and ratepayer communities when carrying out operations, policies, and practices. We should also seek to align equitable outcomes with core-business opportunities, resulting in positive impacts to member communities. The social side of sustainability can also enhance work culture. For instance, a diverse and inclusive workplace allows for a variety of perspectives and a better understanding of communities we serve.

Sustainability and innovation are related. Sustainability can be a muse for innovation, and drive efforts to increase efficiency, conserve resources, and seek co-benefits. Additionally, a culture of innovation with engaged employees, that are open to share ideas, take risks, and collaborate, can make sustainability strides more quickly, and better contribute to external partnerships.

The Sustainability Manager serves on the Diversity Council and the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Advisory Committee, chaired by the Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Specialist, and strives to support DEI efforts. Additionally, the Sustainability Manager serves on the Wellness Community to assist in finding areas of synergy and collaboration between sustainability and wellness.

#### PROGRESS TO DATE:

- In 2019, the District established a Diversity Council. The Council included all the Senior Staff members along with the leadership of each of the Employee Resource Groups and Union Leadership.
- The District currently has eight (8) Employee Resource Groups that connects various members of the District workforce with each other and with the organization.
- In 2019, under the Business Opportunity Program (BOP) \$70 million was awarded to Business Opportunity Program firms. The goal of the Business Opportunity Program is to increase contracting opportunities minority-owned, women-owned, and small businesses (M/W/SBEs), resulting in greater job availability and business growth for the local business community. In addition to contributing to the economic well-being of the region, bringing new M/W/SBEs into the pool of companies doing business with NEORSD enhances NEORSD's competitive bidding processes and ensures that NEORSD customers are afforded the greatest value for their monetary contributions.
- In 2020, The Member Community Infrastructure Program which provides funding opportunities to member communities in our wastewater service area for the design and construction of sanitary sewer infrastructure rehabilitation projects that address water quality and quantity issues, was updated to include funding for design-only projects. This enhances equity and inclusion, as communities who don't have the funds to investigate solutions to infrastructure problems, can begin the process and better understand construction costs and impacts associated with renewal and rehabilitation of local collection system infrastructure.

#### GOALS:

- Promote employee DEI engagement.
- Grow community connectedness and inclusion through targeted outreach.

## OBJECTIVES:

- Each department will create a combination of process and tactical goals for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion by Q1 2021.
- Increase participation and widen the pool of applicants in the Green Infrastructure Grant program through outreach and applicant capacity building such as exploring design-only grant opportunities by Q4 2022.
- Create Water Champion Program to expand public awareness, improve access to affordability programs, answer questions about bills, and collect feedback to better understand concerns of vulnerable communities by Q1 2021.
- Continue Good Neighbor Ambassador Program tying community outreach and career opportunities for unemployed and underemployed individuals in neighborhoods impacted by Sewer District construction projects.
- Increase Employee Resource Group participation by Q4 2021.
- Gain active Sustainability Employee Resource Group membership and sustain participation by involving more employees in lunch and learn sessions, acquainting employees with external sustainability organizations, and setting up a signature event by Q4 2021.

## Find opportunities to share our story and provide progress updates.

Across Senior Staff, there is interest in increasing awareness of the sustainability program. Providing multiple opportunities to share our story with employees will help to enhance the culture of Sustainability at the District, grow the Sustainability Employee Resource Group, and build relationships both internally and externally.



*District Outreach at La Placita, Summer 2019*



#### PROGRESS TO DATE:

- The District has had some form of sustainability committee or sustainability employee resource group since 2008.
- In 2018, the District created a sustainability report.
- The District hosts information about the sustainability program on its external website.

#### GOALS:

- Create structure for sustainability updates.
- Increase awareness of sustainability efforts.

#### OBJECTIVES:

- Establish and develop a framework for ongoing District sustainability reporting by Q3 2022.
- Develop template and email a Quarterly Sustainability Update to employees starting Q1 2021.
- Partner with HR to highlight sustainability benefits (bike award, bus passes, etc.) on benefits website by Q2 2021.
- Update NEORSD Sustainability website content by Q2 2021.
- Promote the quarterly employee awards through the Sustainability ERG and encourage employees to nominate colleagues for an action that exemplifies environmental stewardship by Q2 2021.
- Review the LEED for Existing Buildings prerequisites and credits and determine if it's a viable option for the George J. McMonagle Administration Building by Q4 2021.

## SECTION 7

# IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

We developed the Sustainability Implementation Plan to define outcomes and break down the steps to reaching our goals. It sets target dates for achieving objectives, and identifies initiative leads, key stakeholders, and key external resources.

The Sustainability Implementation Plan is designed to be a living document, which is revised and updated regularly, accessible across the District, and provides a tracking mechanism to measure progress.

The goals and objectives within the implementation plan are grouped by their related sustainability principle and listed in order of importance.

On the alignment page, we outline in detail how each of the Districts sustainability objectives intersect with local, regional, and global sustainability goals. We also note the alignment with effective water utility practices.

*Please see Exhibit 1 on page 30 for a condensed version of this plan.*



*Willoughby/Eastlake School Tree Planting, May 2019*

## SECTION 8

# REPORTING

Internally, there will be three main avenues for reporting on Sustainability Plan progress: quarterly email updates, the implementation plan, and an internal dashboard.

- Starting in Q1 2021, the Sustainability Manager will partner with Communications to develop a framework for quarterly employee email updates that are informative, concise, and relevant. Emails will include upcoming events, new initiatives, progress updates, and opportunities to get involved.
- The implementation plan provides a shared framework for reporting on targets and milestones reached.
- The Special Projects team is determining if EnergyCAP, an energy management software program, can provide internal users with a shared utility dashboard to analyze historical usage, look at trends, and make decisions. Additionally, the special projects team will consider creating an internal dashboard for collecting and sharing sustainability performance metrics.

Externally, the main vehicle for reporting on sustainability plan progress will be the District's sustainability report.

- The District will develop a framework for creating a sustainability report to provide annual or biannual updates on sustainability plan progress. This report will be available on the District's website.
- The Sustainability webpage will provide an opportunity to provide progress updates, share information, and house documents like our greenhouse gas reports, sustainability plan, and sustainability reports.

Flexibility will be needed in the reporting process to accommodate new ideas, new metrics and key performance indicators (KPIs), and modifications and adjustments to our original plan.

## SECTION 9

# HOW OUR SUSTAINABILITY PLAN IMPACTS ME

This first sustainability plan is about information gathering, determining goals, creating procedures, and amplifying current initiatives. That means you won't see quick overnight changes. Rather you'll see over 50 of your colleagues collectively working to understand our current footprint and set the bar for improvement, develop checklists and policies to infuse sustainability into our work, and keep moving ahead with our current sustainability efforts. Here's how this will impact you.

### Employees:

Everyone	Senior Staff/ Managers	Interested Employees
<p>Look out for new energy reduction goals set in partnership with the plants starting in 2022.</p> <p>Design teams should anticipate engaging with the sustainability manager around topics like GHG reductions and resource management.</p> <p>Share feedback around sustainability in Districtwide survey.</p>	<p>Senior staff and managers will be looking for opportunities to support Sustainability Plan goals and objectives.</p> <p>Employees can connect their learning goals to one of the Sustainability Plans' objectives.</p> <p>Provide quarterly progress on Sustainability Plan objectives.</p>	<p>Look for sustainability updates in People and Progress.</p> <p>Attend a Sustainability Employee Resource Group (SERG) event or sign-up to join SERG.</p> <p>Learn more about sustainability with a contact hour class.</p> <p>Consider how you might support one of the District's sustainability objectives through your performance goals.</p> <p>Contact the Sustainability Manager with questions, concerns, or opportunities.</p>



External

NEORSD Suppliers, Contractors, Business Partners	NEORSD Customers & Stakeholders
Suppliers to respond to the sustainability questions in the supplier questionnaire.  District to create sustainable purchasing guidelines by Q3 2022.  Sustainability Manager will engage in the design process for NEORSD projects.	Expect additional communications around sustainability- water conservation, affordability programs, etc.

## SECTION 10

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

NEORSD's first sustainability plan is a result of a collaborative process, in which Senior Staff, plant superintendents, managers, and Sustainability Employee Group members from across the organization provided valuable perspective, helped to refine sustainability goals and KPIs, and contributed new ideas. We also appreciate the dedication and skill of the Communications & Community Relations team, who advised the Sustainability Manager throughout the development of this document.

Additionally, several external stakeholders from the U.S. Water Alliance to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and locally from DrinkLocalDrinkTap to Sustainable Cleveland have provided insight and assistance in better understanding what makes an organization truly sustainable.

# EXHIBITS

## IMPLEMENTATION PLAN, CONDENSED VERSION

**Exhibit 1: Implementation Plan Objectives and Tactics**

Objectives	Tactics	Dates
<b>Greenhouse Gas Reporting</b>  Create a framework for consistent annual greenhouse gas reporting.  Produce updated District greenhouse gas reports.	A. Produce Annual GHG Report Framework  B. Produce 2019-2020 Reports  C. Produce Annual GHG Reports for 2020 and 2019. If resources allow create GHG reports for 2017 and 2018	A. Q3 2021  B. Q4 2021  C. Q2 - Subsequent Years
<b>Greenhouse Gas Emissions Reduction Strategy</b>  Set a target for reducing District greenhouse gas emissions and develop an actionable plan for reducing scope 1, 2 and 3 emissions.	A. Analyze GHG reports 2018-2020 and investigate opportunities to reduce scope 1, 2, and 3 emissions  B. Provide Recommendations for reducing GHG emissions  C. Share targets for reducing GHG emissions	A. Q4 2021  B. Q1 2022  C. Q4 2022
<b>Energy Data Reporting</b>  Enhance reporting platform to provide accurate & timely reports and dashboards for District-wide utility usage & trend analysis.	A. Update configuration  B. Import historical data  C. Develop dashboard & create  D. Ongoing data inputs	A. Q2 2021  B. Q2 2021  C. Q4 2021  D. Ongoing
<b>E&amp;C Design Engagement</b>  Sustainability manager to engage with and seek to understand the design process for District engineering projects to support collaboration.	A. Identify existing or upcoming design project(s) for initial sustainability engagement  B. Establish Design Project - Sustainability Program collaboration criteria  C. Begin routine design process engagement with District engineering projects in accordance with established criteria	A. Q4 2020  B. Q3 2021  C. Q4-2021 and Ongoing

Objectives	Tactics	Dates
<b>E&amp;C Design Engagement</b>  Sustainability Manager to engage with and seek to understand the design process for District engineering projects to support collaboration.	A. Identify existing or upcoming design project(s) for initial sustainability engagement  B. Establish Design Project - Sustainability Program collaboration criteria  C. Begin routine design process engagement with District engineering projects in accordance with established criteria	A. Q4 2020  B. Q3 2021  C. Q4-2021 and Ongoing
<b>E&amp;C Design Checklist</b>  Sustainability Manager partnering with Engineering & Construction Design Managers and Construction Managers to develop a sustainability checklist for use in design process.	A. Begin learning about best practices for reducing GHG in construction via attending Greenbuild conference, consultant feedback, etc.  B. Begin engagement with the 1) Southerly Enhanced Series Treatment Project and 2) Southerly Storage Tunnel Project  C. Present findings on industry practices for reducing construction GHG emissions to E&C Design and Construction Managers for feedback and discussion  D. Draft Sustainability Checklist for E&C design projects and pilot with 1) Southerly Enhanced Series Treatment Project and 2) Southerly Storage Tunnel Project  E. Complete review and revisions of sustainability checklist to highlight areas of potential focus/consideration and use on other projects	A. Q4 2020  B. Q1 2021  C. Q2 2021  D. Q3 2022  E. Q1 2023
<b>Watersheds Construction Projects Checklist</b>  Develop a sustainability checklist for watershed construction projects for use with goal setting and consultant engagement by Q2 2022.	A. Review Envision framework, Effective Utility Management, and other frameworks for ideas  B. Draft checklist for goal setting and consultant engagement, using effective practices  C. Produce and share sustainability checklist for construction projects at 30% or 60% review meetings	A. Q1 2022  B. Q2 2022  C. Subsequent Years

Objectives	Tactics	Dates
<b>Purchasing - Supplier Assessment</b>  Assess the District's suppliers-vendors applicable sustainability efforts via survey.	A. Provide example questions for review by Q1 2021  B. Draft District supplier sustainability questions  C. Share questions with suppliers  D. Review survey responses and recommend next steps	A. Q1 2021  B. Q1 2021  C. Q2 2021  D. Q2 2021
<b>Purchasing - Sustainability Guidelines</b>  Develop District sustainable purchasing guidelines to enhance sustainable purchasing practices.	A. Highlight best practices in sustainable purchasing policies/guidelines  B. Prioritize areas of focus  C. Draft guidelines by Q2 2022  D. Implement guidelines	A. Q3 - 2021  B. Q4 - 2021  C. Q2 - 2022  D. Q3 2022
<b>Electronic Equipment Policies</b>  Create sustainability policies for Electronic Equipment (Purchasing - Use - Retirement).	A. Set standard for energy efficiency of equipment for capital projects and hardware procurement  B. Consider low-cost or no-cost opportunities to conserve energy  C. Formalize practice for electronics recycling	A. Q2 2021  B. Q3 2021  C. Q4 2021
<b>Paper Reduction Pilot Projects</b>  Reduce the amount of paper utilized in business processes.	A. Identify business processes that have potential to significantly reduce paper utilization  B. Evaluate options and develop recommendations for going paperless	A. Q3 2021  B. Q4 2021
<b>Gauge Awareness and Interest</b>  Partner with HR to survey awareness and interest in sustainability efforts.	A. Partner with HR and with feedback from Consultant to develop a sustainability survey question/s for employees  B. Administer survey and collect responses  C. If appropriate, revisit the sustainability survey question/s for comparison in the future  D. Check-in with Innovation Program Manager and HR Specialist Initiatives to evaluate additional opportunities for employee engagement and feedback	A. Q3 2021  B. Q3 2021  C. TBD  D. Starting Q2 2021



Objectives	Tactics	Dates
<b>Electricity Reduction</b>  Reduce electricity usage at the District WWTPs and GJM by 23% compared to 2014 baseline.	A. Continue to implement Infrastructure Improvement plan created in November 2019  B. Report 2020 electricity usage to the Department of Energy's SWIFt Accelerator Program  C. Report Q1-Q4 electricity usage to the Department of Energy's SWIFt Accelerator Program	A. Q4 2021  B. Q3 2021  C. Q1 2022
<b>Utility Reduction Goals</b>  Develop goals for reduction of utilities/commodities for electricity, natural gas and water usage for applicable District facilities.	A. Detailed milestones to be developed  B. Finalize goals for reduction of utilities	A. Q4 2021  B. Q2 2022
<b>Develop Utility Reduction Plans</b>  Develop and implement plans for electricity reduction in accordance with defined Utility Reduction Goals - For WWTPs - For EMSC/GJM - For Outlying Facilities	A. Detailed milestones to be developed  B. Finalize Utility Reduction Plan	A. Q1 2022  B. Q3 2022
<b>Vehicle Utilization Policies</b>  Review the idling policy for utilization of District vehicles and revise the policy.	A. Review the current anti-idling policy, discuss challenges, and investigate effective practices to reduce idling  B. Revise current idling policy and seek senior staff approval  C. Roll-out idling policy to staff and integrate within the District employee handbook	A. Q1 2021  B. Q2 2021  C. Q4 2021
<b>Beneficial Reuse of Grit</b>  Re-bid management contract with beneficial reuse option.	A. Begin beneficially reusing grit through new contract  B. Evaluate costs, ease and effectiveness of first beneficial use contract  C. Recommend ongoing guidance	A. Q3 2021  B. Q2 2023  C. Q3 2023

Objectives	Tactics	Dates
<b>Composting Program: Food Waste</b>  Implement composting pilot program at GJM and recommend guidance for potential composting activities.	A. Baseline Assessment & initial diversion rate determined  B. Updated Assessment & updated diversion rate  C. Assess impact and determine metrics for improvement  D. Recommend next steps	TBD
<b>Explore Composting Sediment from SWIM Maintenance Sites</b>  Explore composting sediment removed by SWIM from sediment-prone assets along the Regional Stormwater System (RSS), determine viability and next steps.	A. Set-up pilot for composting sediment removed from SWIM sites  B. Track quantity, cost, and ease of composting sediment  C. Assess costs, ease and quantity and determine next steps	A: Q3 2020  B: Q1-Q4 2021  C: Q4 2021
<b>Pilot Composting Woody Debris from SWIM Maintenance Sites</b>  Explore composting woody debris removed by SWIM from debris-prone assets along the Regional Stormwater System (RSS), determine viability and next steps.	A. Set-up pilot for composting woody debris from SWIM sites  B. Track quantity, cost, and ease of composting woody debris  C. Assess costs, ease and quantity and determine next steps	A: Q3 2020  B: Q1-Q4 2021  C: Q4 2021
<b>Pilot Composting Landscaping Debris from SWIM GI Sites</b>  Implement composting pilot program, evaluate process, costs, etc., and recommend guidance for composting landscaping debris removed from District Green Infrastructure sites.	A. Set-up Pilot Composting at GI Worker Maintained Sites  B. Track quantity and cost for composting landscaping debris  C. Assess baseline data on landscaping debris generated and options for composting  D. Determine plan for composting at remaining Appendix 3 GI sites	A: Q3 2020  B: Q1-Q4 2021  C: Q3 2021  D: Q1 2022

Objectives	Tactics	Dates
<b>Clean Water Fest Waste Reduction: Find Options to Reduce Waste</b>  Reduce overall waste at District Clean Water Fest events and implement appropriate sustainable business practices.	A. Partner with CCR to understand Clean Water Fest waste streams and brainstorm ideas for reducing waste  B. Investigate alternative options and select most viable option for reducing waste  C. Develop implementation plan for roll-out at Clean Water Fest  D. Measure waste and assess impact	A. Q1 2021  B. Q2 2021 & Q2 on-going  C. Q3 2021 & Q3 on-going  D. Sept 2021
<b>Set Future Clean Water Fest Waste Reduction Goals</b>  Use waste data collected from Clean Water Fest activities to set waste reduction goal/s for future events by Q1 annually.	A. Partner with volunteers and service providers to collect data on waste generated at Clean Water Fest 2021  B. Set waste reduction goal for Clean Water Fest 2022  C. Review data on waste and set reduction goals for future Clean Water Fests	A. Q3 2021  B. Q1 2022  C. Q1 ongoing
<b>Renewable Energy Utilization</b>  Procure 50% or higher renewable electricity at First Energy sites (including EMSC, GJM, the Southerly Plant and some outlying facilities) by Q2 2022.	A. Investigate accelerators, seminars, and conferences to better understand renewable energy market  B. Assist in electricity procurement (sharing renewable energy information, investigating options, attending meetings, and providing support)  C. Procure 50% or higher renewable energy at First Energy sites	A. Q1 2021  B. Q4 2021-Q2 2022  C. Q2 2022
<b>On-site Facilities Reuse</b>  As staffing and/or storage/light industrial space needs are identified, the District-wide Decommissioning Study (DECOM) final reports serve as a reference for the availability of on-site facilities, specifically at the Easterly WWTP.	A. DECOM study final report utilized to determine available on-site locations for staffing, storage, or light industrial space <a href="https://neorsd.sharefile.com/d-se3635da6883c493b828a88a647654968">https://neorsd.sharefile.com/d-se3635da6883c493b828a88a647654968</a>	A. Ongoing

Objectives	Tactics	Dates
<b>Tree Inventory</b>  Conduct District Tree Inventory to catalog tree locations, assess trees, identify new sites to plant trees, and support tree canopy growth.	A. Coordinate with GIS services to rollout the Tree Inventory Application for District use  B. Finalize job aids to supplement inventory  C. Conduct training on identifying common NE Ohio Trees and/or using the Tree Inventory Application  D. Coordinate with stakeholders (e.g., SERG, SSMO, SWIM) to conduct tree inventory on key District sites including GI	A. Q2 2022  B. Q2 2022  C. Q3 2022  D. Q3 2022
<b>Tree Canopy Collaboration</b>  Continue support of Cleveland Tree Coalition to promote tree planting and efforts to grow green jobs and strengthen workforce development objectives through initiatives like the urban tree nursery pilot project.	A. Sustainability Mgr. to lead District participation in the Cleveland Tree Coalition and determine appropriate avenues for engagement and intersection  B. As the leadership and goals of the Tree Coalition evolve, reevaluate District partnership and as needed set goals/milestones	A. Ongoing  B. As needed
<b>Greenway Collaboration</b>  Continue to participate in Cuyahoga Greenway Partners to discover opportunities to connect our work creating and restoring wetlands, floodplains and streams, with efforts to enhance foot and bike trails in Cuyahoga County.	A. Watershed Programs Manager to attend monthly executive committee meetings  B. Watershed Team Leaders and Stormwater Projects Specialist to attend monthly Greenway Partners meetings  C. Cross promote the Cuyahoga Greenway Partners work to support active transportation infrastructure and increased mobility options in Cuyahoga County through District Communications Channels as needed	A. Ongoing  B. Ongoing  C. Ongoing

Objectives	Tactics	Dates
<b>Lights Out Cleveland</b>  Investigate the Lights Out Cleveland program to reduce bird collisions and evaluate program participation.	A. Partner with Security and Building Administration to determine sources of exterior and interior evening lighting and evaluate participation criteria without compromising safety or security  B. Meet with Lights Out program coordinator to learn more about program requirements  C. Evaluate participation and determine next steps	A. Q1 2020  B. Q2 2021  C. Q2 2021
<b>Stormwater Master Plan Creation:</b>  Watersheds Programs Department to complete one additional stormwater master plan.	A. complete one additional stormwater master plan	A. Q4 2021
<b>Track Pervious Surface &amp; Green Infrastructure Creation</b>  Partner with the Watersheds Programs Department to create a comprehensive list of pervious surface type alternatives and create a system to track green infrastructure implementation and annual pervious surface creation within District Properties.	A. Create list of alternative types and internal structure for tracking data  B. Track data and report annually	A. Q4 2021  B. Subsequent Years
<b>DE&amp;I Goal Development</b>  Develop department-specific process & tactical goals for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion.	A. Each department will create their own Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Goals for Q4 2020-2021  B. Publish all department DEI goals into a central document	A. Q1 2021  B. Q1 2021



Objectives	Tactics	Dates
<b>Green Infrastructure Grants</b>  Eliminate barriers to participate in Green Infrastructure Grant program through outreach and applicant capacity building.	A. Engage with Glenville and Tremont CDCs and invite them to the grant workshop in 2021  B. Engage with SERG and encourage them to spread the word about GI grants to their networks in 2021 and 2022  C. Engage with local partners to share the message about GI grants and to look out for potential projects  D. Brainstorm revisions to the GI grant program (as applicable) that would lower the upfront capital needed for this reimbursement grant and review potential ideas with legal  E. Partner with CCR to help pitch stories of 2021 grant awardees broadly	A. Q1-Q2 2021  B. Q1 2021-Q4 2022  C. Starting Q1 2021  D. Q3 2021  E. Q4 2021
<b>Create Water Champion Program</b>  Expand public awareness, improve access to affordability programs, answer questions about bills, and collect feedback to better understand concerns of vulnerable communities.	A. Find a partner to administer and manager a Water Champion program to share information and collect feedback  B. Post job description for 2 Water Champions  C. Hire 2-full-time Water Champions	A. Q3 2020  B. Q3 2020  C. Q1 2021
<b>Continue Good Neighbor Ambassador Program</b>  Continue Good Neighbor Ambassador Program tying community outreach and career opportunities for unemployedand underemployed individuals in neighborhoodsimpacted by Sewer District construction projects.	A. Recruit and select 10 GNAs for Cohort Seven starting work on the Westside of Cleveland	A. Q1 2021

Objectives	Tactics	Dates
<b>Increase Employee Resource Group participation</b>  Create opportunities to expand employees' sense of community, camaraderie, and connection to the organization, foster communication and opportunities for mentorship and education.	A. Increase employee resource group membership to 200  B. Increase employee resource group event and activity participation by 5 percent annually	A. Q1 2021  B. Q4 2021
<b>Sustainability Employee Resource Group Involvement (SERG)</b>  Gain active membership and sustain participation by involving more employees in lunch and learn sessions, acquainting employees with external sustainability organizations, and setting up a signature event.	A. Register over 25 employees in the Sustainability ERG  B. Involve 1 or more employees outside of the executive committee in planning a SERG educational session  C. Acquaint employees with at least 1 external sustainability organization in 2021 through setting up a lunch and learn hosted by a local group  D. Set-up a signature SERG event that allows for connection and service	A. Q1 2021  B. Q2 2021  C. Q4 2021  D. Q4 2021
<b>Sustainability Program Reporting</b>  Establish and develop a framework for ongoing District sustainability reporting.	A. Review milestones and metrics from sustainability plan to determine what metrics should be reported on a regular basis  B. Connect with Strategic Plan Team to determine, what related metrics will be tracked in the 2022 Strategic Plan  C. Review models and effective practices for sustainability reporting  D. Evaluate options for format, frequency of sustainability reporting - annual, bi-annual or every few years, and establish framework guidelines  E. Complete sustainability report	A. Q1 2021  B. Q1 2021  C. Q3 2021  D. Q4 2021  E. Q3 2022

Objectives	Tactics	Dates
<b>Sustainability Quarterly Updates</b>  Partner with CCR to develop a template and share a Quarterly Sustainability Email with Employees starting in Q1 2021.	A. Determine what information could be shared via this quarterly email update  B. Share ideas with CCR and determine the best avenue for these updates (separate email, adding them to People and Progress, etc.)	A. Q1 2021  B. Q1 2021
<b>Highlight District Sustainability Benefits</b>  Partner with Human Resources to highlight sustainability benefits (bike award, bus passes, etc.) on the District Benefits page on the Internet and the Intranet.	A. Develop list of sustainability benefits to tout on benefits page  B. Hone list and partner with HR to highlight sustainability benefits on the District Internet and Intranet	A. Q1 2021  B. Q1 2021
<b>External Website</b>  Update NEORSD Sustainability website content by Q3 2021.	A. Partner with CCR to determine strategy for sustainability website that fits with new District brand  B. Implement changes and update website	A. Starting in Q1 2021 and ongoing  B. Initial updates by Q3 2021
<b>Promote Employee Awards</b>  Promote quarterly employee awards and encourage SERG to nominate colleagues for an action that exemplifies environmental stewardship.	A. Promote the awards at the January 2021 SERG meeting  B. Highlight the awards and provide reminders as needed	A. Q1 2021  B. Starting in Q1 2021 and ongoing
<b>Investigate LEED Certification:</b> Review the LEED for Existing Buildings version 4 prerequisites and credits and determine if it's a viable option for the George J. McMonagle Administration Building by Q4 2021.	A. Obtain the updated EnergyStar Portfolio Manager Score for GJM  B. Determine if GJM meets the prerequisites for energy and other key areas  C. Determine next steps	A. Q1 2021  B. Q2 2021  C. Q4 2021

## Exhibit 2: Sustainability Plan Alignment

NEORSD Sustainability Plan Objectives	Areas of Alignment				
	NEORSD Strategic Plan	Cleveland Climate Action Plan	Cuyahoga County CAP & Sustainability Strategic Plan	EPA-EUM Sustainability Roadmap	UN Sustainable Development Goals
Greenhouse Gas Reporting	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Greenhouse Gas Emissions Reduction Strategy	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Energy Data Reporting	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
E&C Design Engagement	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
E&C Design Checklist	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Watersheds Construction Projects Checklist	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Purchasing - Supplier Assessment	Y	Y	Y		Y
Purchasing - Sustainability Guidelines	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Electronic Equipment Policies	Y	Y		Y	Y
Paper Reduction Pilot Projects	Y	Y			Y
Gauge Awareness and Interest	Y		Y		Y
Electricity Reduction	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Utility Reduction Goals	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Develop Utility Reduction Plans	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Vehicle Utilization Policies	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Beneficial Reuse of Grit	Y	Y		Y	Y
Composting Program- Food Waste	Y	Y		Y	Y
Explore Composting Sediment at SWIM Maintenance Sites	Y	Y		Y	Y
Pilot Composting Woody Debris at SWIM Maintenance Sites	Y	Y		Y	Y
Pilot Composting Landscaping Debris at SWIM GI Sites	Y	Y		Y	Y
Clean Water Fest Waste Reduction: Find Options to Reduce Waste	Y	Y	Y		Y

	Areas of Alignment				
NEORDS Sustainability Plan Objectives	NEORDS Strategic Plan	Cleveland Climate Action Plan	Cuyahoga County CAP & Sustainability Strategic Plan	EPA-EUM Sustainability Roadmap	UN Sustainable Development Goals
Set Future Clean Water Fest Waste Reduction Goals	Y	Y	Y		Y
Renewable Energy Utilization	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
On-site Facilities Reuse	Y		Y		Y
Tree Inventory	Y	Y	Y		Y
Tree Canopy Collaboration	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Greenway Collaboration	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Lights Out Cleveland	Y				Y
Stormwater Master Plan Creation	Y	Y	Y		Y
Track Previous Surface & Green Infrastructure Creation	Y	Y	Y		Y
DE&I Goal Development	Y	Y			Y
Green Infrastructure Grants	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Create Water Champion Program	Y	Y			Y
Continue Good Neighbor Ambassador Program	Y	Y			Y
Increase Employee Resource Group participation	Y	Y	Y		Y
Sustainability Employee Resource Group Involvement	Y	Y			Y
Sustainability Program Reporting	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Sustainability Quarterly Updates	Y		Y		Y
Highlight District Sustainability Benefits	Y	Y	Y		Y
External Website	Y		Y	Y	Y
Promote Employee Awards	Y		Y	Y	Y
Investigate LEED Certification	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y



# APPENDIX

## DIGITAL VERSION

### Acronyms

- a. Cleveland Tree Coalition CTC
- b. Cleveland Electric Illuminating Company CEI
- c. District-wide Decommissioning Study DECOM
- d. Diversity, Equity & Inclusion DEI
- e. Employee Resource Group ERG
- f. The Environmental and Maintenance Services Center EMSC
- g. Green Infrastructure GI
- h. George J. McMonagle Administration Building GJM
- i. Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design for Building Operations and Maintenance LEED EBOM
- j. Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design LEED
- k. Renewable Energy Facility REF
- l. Stormwater Inspection & Maintenance SWIM
- m. Regional Stormwater System RSS
- n. United Nations Sustainable Development Goals UN SDGs
- o. United States Environmental Protection Agency US EPA
- p. Wastewater Treatment Plant WWPT

### District Terminology | Sustainability Definitions

- a. Conservation: Any behavior that results in using less energy.
- b. Diversity: All the ways we are different
- c. Efficiency: Using technology that requires less energy to perform the same function.
- d. Equity: Creating policies and procedures that eliminate barriers to full participation.
- e. Green Infrastructure: Stormwater source control measures that store, filter, infiltrate, harvest and reuse, or evapotranspire stormwater to increase resiliency of infrastructure by reducing stress on wet-weather drainage and collection systems which increase co-benefits in support of healthy environments and strong communities.

- f. Idling: when a vehicle is running, but not moving and the driver has no intention of moving.
- g. Inclusion: Leveraging differences to create an organization of excellence.

For more information please visit:

<https://www.neorsd.org/about/what-we-do/sustainability-program/>

<https://twitter.com/neorsd>

<https://facebook.com/yoursewerdistrict>

<https://instagram.com/neorsd>

<https://youtube.com/neorsdccb>