

Little Cuyahoga River Proposed Balanced Growth Initiative Frequently Asked Questions

What is a Balanced Growth Planning?

Adopted in 2009, Ohio's Balanced Growth Program is a **voluntary, incentive-based** strategy to protect and restore Lake Erie, the Ohio River, and Ohio's watersheds to assure long-term economic competitiveness, ecological health, and quality of life. The recommendations focus on reducing urban sprawl, protecting natural resources and encouraging redevelopment in urban areas.

Why Participate in Balanced Growth Program?

Financial incentives - There are 26 environmental and economic development state programs that include special consideration for Balanced Growth participating communities. A participating community is one that has passed a resolution of support for a Watershed Balanced Growth Plan that will be or has been endorsed by the state. Please refer to the handout titled "Ohio Balanced Growth Program Fact Sheet: Special Incentives" for details what programs are linked to the program.

Why the Little Cuyahoga River?

The timing is right for a Little Cuyahoga River Balanced Growth Plan, according to attendees at two watershed meetings held in 2010 and 2012. Several projects have been recently completed, are on-going, or are planned over the next several years. These projects include stream restoration work near the Goodyear World Headquarters development, the City of Akron's Long Term Control Plan for nearly eliminating combined sewer overflows, and storm water programs throughout the watershed. A Balanced Growth Plan would provide a uniform vision of development and natural resource protection for the watershed. In addition, financial incentives linked to the Balanced Growth Program could help communities fund future stream restoration and economic development projects.

What is Needed from Little Cuyahoga River Watershed Communities?

Participation and a Resolution of Support - For a Balanced Growth Plan to be approved and successful, local government representatives must be involved with the plan's development and implementation. Local input is needed to determine priority areas for development, re-development, conservation, and agriculture. In order to be endorsed by the state thereby making the watershed communities eligible for special financial incentives, local governments representing 75% of the watershed's area **and** population must pass a resolution of support for the Balanced Growth Plan once completed.

How is the Balanced Growth Plan Development Funded?

NEFCO currently is using funds received from Ohio EPA and membership due to address water quality issues in Portage, Summit, Stark, and Wayne Counties. NEFCO is not requesting any additional funds from local watershed communities to develop the Balanced Growth Plan.

Little Cuyahoga River Proposed Balanced Growth Initiative Watershed Characteristics

Watershed Size

Watershed Size = 63.3 square miles

City of Akron = 41.3%
Suffield Township = 23.3%
City of Tallmadge = 12.4%
Springfield Township = 8.8%
Brimfield Township = 7.9%
Village of Mogadore = 3.4%
Village of Lakemore = 2.4%
Randolph Township = less than 1%

(NEFCO, 2012)

Watershed Land Cover

Open Water = 5.0%
Developed, Open Space = 21.5%
Developed, Low Intensity = 23.5%
Developed, Med. Intensity = 14.6%
Developed, High Intensity = 6.8%
Barren Land = 0.1%
Deciduous Forest = 16.2%
Evergreen Forest = 1.1%
Grassland = 1.2%
Pasture Hay = 4.7%
Cultivated Crops = 3.8%
Woody Wetlands = 1.4%

(National Land Cover Data, 2006)

Watershed Impervious Area

Entire Watershed = 24.0%

Subwatershed Impervious Areas

Mogadore Reservoir Subwatershed = 3.1%
Wingfoot Lake to Springfield Lake Outlet Subwatershed = 17.6%
Springfield Lake Outlet Subwatershed = 26.8%
Springfield Lake Outlet to Mouth Subwatershed = 43.6%

(NEFCO, 2010)

Little Cuyahoga River Water Quality Summary

- Not Attaining Biological (fish & macroinvertebrates) and Recreational (bacteria) Use Standards
- Reasons: Combined Sewer Overflows, Habitat Loss, Polluted Storm Water Runoff, Legacy Pollution, Dams, Dredging, and Organic Enrichment
- Harmful Algal Blooms in Wingfoot Lake
- Poor Water Quality Throughout the Watershed

(Ohio EPA, 2010 Integrated Water Quality Monitoring and Assessment Report)

Watershed Population

Watershed Population = 122,907

City of Akron = 74.5%
City of Tallmadge = 9.6%
Springfield Township = 5.9%
Suffield Township = 3.2%
Village of Mogadore = 3.2%
Village of Lakemore = 2.4%
Brimfield Township = 1.2%
Randolph Township = less than 1%

(US Census, 2010)

Watershed Land Use

Vacant Land = 35.5%
Residential = 30.3%
Transportation Facilities = 12.8%
Public Open Space = 7.2%
Manufacturing = 3.7%
Public Buildings = 3.4%
Service Industry = 2.8%
Wholesale = 1.9%
Retail Goods = 1.3%
Transportation Terminals/Utility Facilities = 0.7%
Other = 0.4%

(AMATS, 2005)