

Ohio Balanced Growth Program

Fact Sheet: Indicators

An indicator is something that helps you understand where you are, which way you are going, and how far you are from where you want to be. Indicators are like pieces of evidence, or clues that tell us about the condition of something of interest.

Environmental indicators provide useful information to assess the condition of and, when tracked over time, trends occurring in our surroundings. Performance measures are the metrics used to monitor and report the progress and accomplishments of specific programs or projects, and can be used to gauge program or project performance. All indicators must be measurable so that changes can be compared over time and/or to an end point or a reference point.

The Balanced Growth Task Force recommended the development of three types of indicators to measure success of the program in guiding land development and conservation. Participants at a roundtable workshop held in January 2005 selected a suite of indicators to fit each category. These indicators will be used to measure Balanced Growth success as the program is implemented across Ohio.

Programmatic Indicators- tracking whether the initiative is being implemented and whether it is changing policies at the state and local levels.

- Change in Public Economic Development Investment in PDAs
- Change in Public Conservation Investment in PCAs
- Change in Number of Watershed that have a Balanced Growth Watershed Planning Partnership
- Change in Number of Endorsed Watershed Balanced Growth Plans
- Change in Number of Local Comprehensive Land Use Plans in Watershed that Identify PCAs and PDAs to Guide Local Land Use Decisions
- Change in Number of PCAs and PDAs
- Change in Number of Local Governments/Communities Adopting Best Practices

Land Use and Socioeconomic Indicators- tracking whether the policy changes are changing patterns of land use.

- Change in Impervious Surface Cover
- Change in Residential and Other Development Intensity in PDAs vs. Outside PDAs
- Change in Percentage of New Commercial and Industrial Building Floor Area and New Housing Units Going Into PDAs vs. Rest of the Watershed
- Change in Number of Acres of Land in Conservation/Protected Status in PCAs

Natural Resource Indicators- tracking whether the land use changes actually produce improvements in watershed health.

- Change in Water Chemistry
- Change Biotic Quality