



Greater New Orleans
Clean Air Coalition

Strategic Plan
2017 - 2018

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RPC Project PUBEDOUT

A. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

1. Coalition Description

The Regional Planning Commission (RPC) is an active participant in the Ozone Advance Program, a collaborative effort between the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), states, tribes, and local governments to encourage expeditious emission reductions in ozone attainment areas to help the region continue to meet National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS). In late 2015, EPA proposed the new ground-level ozone standard at 0.070 parts per million (ppm), and the New Orleans-Metairie-Kenner MSA is on the verge of falling into non-attainment. Through taking proactive steps to reduce ground-level ozone emissions, this program has the goal of better positioning areas to remain in attainment even if the NAAQS become more stringent.

Using the example set by the Baton Rouge Clean Air Coalition and with the assistance of the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality (LDEQ), the RPC has formed the Greater New Orleans Clean Air Coalition (GNOCAC). This is a coalition of local governments, state environmental agencies, relevant trade associations (e.g., Louisiana Chemical Association), businesses, industries, and ports who convene with the goal of finding the most effective ways to improve air quality, specifically focused on ozone. Coalition members are based in, or have a relationship to, any of the parishes along the Mississippi River or Gulf Coast in the New Orleans metropolitan region that are eligible for Congestion Mitigation & Air Quality (CMAQ) funding.

2. Vision and Mission

Vision: We envision a metropolitan region that is a national model for cross-sector collaboration that creates an environmentally and economically sustainable community.

Mission: The GNOCAC will be a regional leader in enhancing air quality and economic opportunity by facilitating coordination, cooperation, and communication between private industry, government, and non-profit organizations.

3. Key Personnel

Walter Brooks, RPC Executive Director: wbrooks@norpc.org

Tom Haysley, GNOCAC Project Manager/ RPC Senior Planner: thaysley@norpc.org

Courtney Young, RPC Transportation Planner: cyoung@norpc.org

Michael Vince (Clear Skies Environmental, LLC), GNOCAC Coordinator:
cleanairneworleans@norpc.org

4. Grants and Funding

The Greater New Orleans Clean Air Coalition is sustained through the RPC's Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) Program. RPC was awarded a CMAQ grant from Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development (LaDOTD) to conduct public education and outreach regarding air quality and to establish a Clean Air Coalition to convene the region's

emitters and area emissions sources to proactively and voluntarily identify emission reduction options for appropriate facilities, equipment, and operations.

B. GOALS/ OBJECTIVES AND TASKS

Goal 1: Coalition Maintenance

Objective: Maintenance is a crucial factor of the GNOCAC's success. Key personnel, with the help of its dedicated members, will ensure the proper planning, systematic functioning, and effectiveness of the Coalition.

Tasks:

- a) Determine structure for GNOCAC
 - *The structure will be determined after members have had the opportunity to vet the mission, vision, and goals.*
 - Example Options:
 - Elect leadership team (3-5 members) committed to guide coalition and design implementable strategies to solve air quality issues
 - Establish working groups/steering committees for specific projects
 - Develop member roles and responsibilities
- b) Secure commitments from members to maintain active and ongoing participation in GNOCAC activities.
- c) Maintain database of stakeholders and resources
- d) Hold regular meetings (see additional information under Goal 2 below)
- e) Develop meeting materials: agendas, invitations, sign-in sheets, presentation handouts, minutes, etc.
- f) Identify the factors that will lead to continued member participation and expanding membership.
- g) At the end of each annual Strategic Plan period, evaluate progress made towards achieving the Coalition's goals, as well as the relevance of the goals themselves, and adjust activities as necessary.

Goal 2: Share Information

Objective: Coalition members are constantly seeking new methods to reduce emissions and improve their environmental impact. Doing so requires that they stay abreast of new developments within their field as well as the broader arena of environmental protection. At the same time, their own successes may be replicated or adapted by other Coalition members. The GNOCAC will provide a forum for members to share recent successes and lessons learned, as well as for outside organizations to present new and innovative practices.

Tasks:

- a) Hold regular meetings with relevant stakeholders
 - Invite speakers to present on relevant topics and engage stakeholders in related discussions

- Provide an opportunity for members to share and discuss updates on their current air quality-related activities, best practices, ideas, challenges and success stories
- Educate members about new and/or applicable initiatives related to improving air quality including proposed or new legislation and resources for project implementation (funding opportunities, technical assistance, etc.)
- Encourage membership communication outside of regular meetings
- Provide regular updates via email and other media
- Invite key staff and stakeholders to gatherings such as industry group meetings, public meetings, and workshops
- Maintain contact information for members and other relevant stakeholders

Goal 3: Project Collaboration

Objective: The GNOCAC brings together a diverse group of stakeholders, each with their own network of groups and individuals who may influence or benefit from enhanced air quality. As a group, the Coalition offers a unique opportunity to facilitate collaboration among a wide array of stakeholders with the goal of implementing policies and projects that will improve air quality.

Tasks:

- a) “Walk the walk” by implementing emissions-reducing policies within member organizations; Examples include:
 - Idling policy of no longer than 10 seconds if operating an employee vehicle;
 - Commitment to convert a percentage of vehicle fleet to alternative fuels by 2030;
 - Sustainable commuter initiative to promote walking, biking, car/vanpooling, and public transit.
- b) Secure commitments from members to explore or implement policies for reducing air emissions.
- c) Conduct needs assessments for GNOCAC members to determine their need for new policies and projects as well as their organizations’ implementation capacity.
- d) Identify resources for implementation, including but not limited to technical assistance and grant funding.
- e) Develop action plans for projects with goals and specific tasks.
- f) Collectively identify and prioritize potential projects for the region; Example projects:
 - Explore car and vanpool options with alternative fuel vehicles;
 - Vehicle conversions and idle reduction campaigns.
- g) Create case studies based on implemented policies and projects to highlight lessons learned.

Goal 4: Policy Implementation

Objective: As regional leaders in air quality, members of the GNOCAC will work to implement emissions-reducing policies by coordinating with government entities to advance legislative action that promotes better air quality and economic vitality.

Tasks:

- a) Build relationships between the public and private sector by facilitating conversations between regulating entities and the industries that are regulated.
- b) Develop legislative action steps and talking points for citywide campaigns and policies:
 - Research emissions-reducing policies and legislation at the local and State level from other areas;
 - Develop a list of potential policies/ legislation that may benefit the New Orleans region;
 - Connect with local and state government official to pass and implement policies/ legislation that would benefit air quality in the region;
 - Accumulate public interest by highlighting success stories of internal policies above (see Goal 6 below).
- c) Express ideas/ concerns on proposed or current legislation to federal and State regulators such as US EPA (e.g., bank credits prior to nonattainment designation) to help facilitate the goal of improved air quality.

Goal 5: Public Outreach

Objective: RPC, LDEQ, EPA, and other public agencies have an obligation to maintain open communication with the public, both seeking input and providing information. Industries and non-profits also benefit from public outreach, and frequently undertake such efforts as part of their normal operations. Members of the GNOCAC will assist with each other's public outreach initiatives to enhance the overall relationship between government, industry, non-profits, and the public.

Tasks:

- a) GNOCAC members will assist fellow coalition members (including EPA, LDEQ & RPC) with their air quality-related outreach initiatives:
 - Provide GNOCAC contact list to members to help develop relationships and resources;
 - As applicable, distribute information on coalition member air quality projects and events to relevant contact lists to help cross-promote events and highlight progress on air quality initiatives in the region;
 - Provide event resources as applicable for air quality-related outreach (e.g. provide snacks, meeting space, AV equipment, etc.).
- b) Coordinate the region's first EPA School Flag Program:
 - Develop an outreach and implementation plan to execute the project;
 - Edit the plan as the project progresses to help facilitate future projects;
 - Contact schools in the target region to identify project champions to help implement the program;
 - Solicit funding for school flags.
- c) Organize Air Quality Awareness Week and Ozone Action Days:
 - Work with news agencies to publicize information about Ozone Action Days;
 - Develop a plan for activities during Air Quality Awareness Week each May.

Goal 6: Regional Success Documentation

Objective: Each GNOCAC member engages in activities that have quantitative and qualitative benefits on air quality. Many of these efforts, however, often escape widespread recognition. There have also been limited efforts to aggregate the impacts of such activities at a regional level. With the RPC as the lead agency, the GNOCAC will recognize, document, share and publicize clean air activities undertaken by its members.

Tasks:

- a) Collect and aggregate data on local air quality initiatives within the region
- b) Document emissions reductions and economic savings achieved
- c) Recognize activities in RPC's quarterly newsletter, other GNOCAC member publications, and other marketing materials for the general public
- d) Develop a map of air quality projects in the region with basic information on the type of project and the benefits
- e) Include the data in RPC's Ozone Advance Report to EPA

C. Stakeholders

The GNOCAC includes a wide cross section of stakeholders to help inform and implement clean air projects in the region including:

- Local government agencies with a direct relationship to air quality, energy, or transportation
- State environmental agencies such as LDEQ, LDNR and LaDOTD
- Federal Agencies - EPA, USDOE, USDOT, FHWA, FTA
- Relevant trade associations (e.g., Louisiana Chemical Association, MCOGA),
- Industries that directly produce, or provide the materials for production of, energy or maritime transportation
- Businesses organizations that provide services to the energy or maritime industries, including consultants, brokers, freight forwarders, and other third-parties
- Ports within the geographic area served by the GNOCAC
- Other organizations or individuals with a direct relationship to air quality, as identified by GNOCAC members

Other stakeholders that may be impacted or contribute to our efforts include:

- Environmental groups
- Neighborhood associations
- Non-profits