

**Local
Government
Advisory
Committee**



Hon. Bob Dixon, Chair
Greensburg, Kansas

January 9, 2014

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The Honorable Gina McCarthy
Administrator
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20460

Dear Administrator McCarthy:

The Local Government Advisory Committee appreciates your leadership in setting forth the goals and objectives of the Draft FY2014-2018 EPA Strategic Plan (*The Plan*). The LGAC has received two briefings by the Acting Chief Financial Officer, Maryann Froehlich and we appreciate the time she and her staff put forth in laying out the core foundation of the Plan and answering questions of the committee.

We also acknowledge that EPA is making efforts to engage its many stakeholders and responding to comments on the Plan. After a thorough review and analysis, we offer the following general comments based upon our committee's review. In the attachment, we are providing detailed comments and recommendations on each of the goals articulated in The Plan.

Findings

- We appreciate that the focus of The Plan is on "innovative, cost-effective and sustainable approaches to protecting human health and the environment".
- The LGAC puts forth a strong endorsement not only for the five strategic goals for its programmatic mission but also, the cross-cutting goals, for measurable outcomes of results for the American people over the next four years.
- We strongly endorse the principles set forth to achieve a "new era in state, tribal and local partnerships" and the LGAC as your local advisors stand ready to assist you and your EPA colleagues to achieve that.
- The LGAC also strongly endorses and commends EPA for incorporating sustainability and "livability" into its programs for regulatory, enforcement and grants/incentive programs. Especially, the LGAC endorses the emphasis on small and communities.

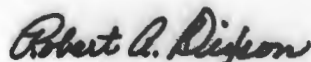
- Furthermore, the LGAC urges EPA to build flexibility into its implementation of its regulatory, enforcement and granting authorities for state, tribal and local governments to address environmental challenges.
- Likewise, the LGAC also encourages the principles EPA has set forth to pursue new technological advances and tools which will aide and increase our effectiveness in environmental progress.
- Particularly, we point out the continuous needs for local, state and tribal governments for sharing environmental data which will enhance our ability at the local level to achieve broad based benefits for planning and implementation.
- The LGAC also commends the EPA for its efforts to close the gap in health disparities for the underserved and disadvantaged communities, including environmental justice concerns. We believe this effort should also be extended to address growing health and environmental concerns of small communities under 10,000 which are often challenged in providing the very basics of infrastructure for clean air and water.
- The LGAC endorses the approach that the EPA has made in linking the Strategic Plan to the Climate Action Plan and Implementation Plans. This cross-linkage ensures quantifiable and measurable results to better support local preparedness and resilience-building efforts.
- The Plan's collaborative and watershed-based approach to protecting and restoring watersheds and aquatic ecosystems is notable and appreciated by the LGAC.
- The LGAC also acknowledges that the ten EPA Regional offices provide direct on the ground assistance for state, tribal and local governments.

Overall, the Draft Strategic Plan embraces several important tenets of collaboration and cooperation to improve the health of our nation's environment, economy and people. The LGAC congratulates the EPA on drafting a Strategic Plan that provides an outstanding foundation for advancing environmental stewardship nationally and locally. The EPA staff should be commended for their work to provide such an inclusive plan of action for the future.

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The LGAC is happy to work with you and your leadership team to optimize results in our communities. Thank you for the opportunity to share our comments.

Sincerely,



Mayor, Bob Dixon
Chair

Enclosure