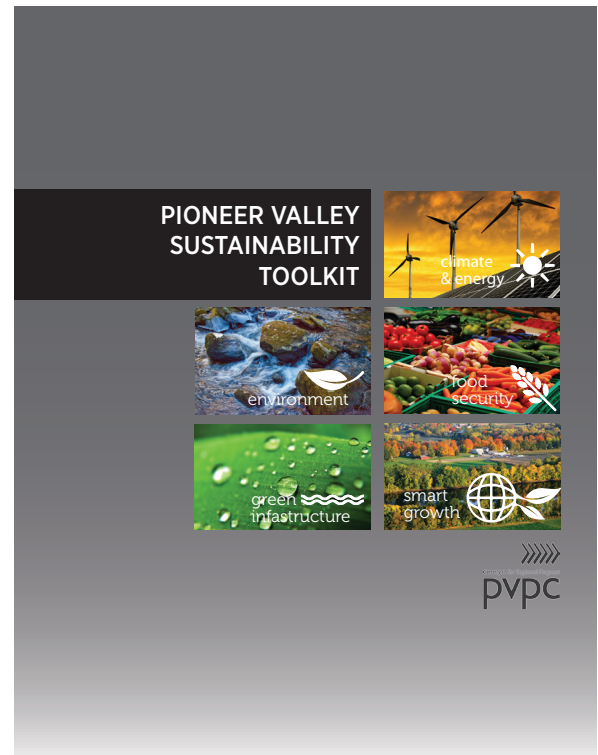


# PVPC Announces Release of New Pioneer Valley Sustainability Toolkit

The Pioneer Valley Planning Commission has released a new Pioneer Valley Sustainability Toolkit with several goals in mind:

- To assist communities, by providing technical assistance and resources, to help them in adopting strategies to take action on climate change, promote use of clean energy sources, grow smarter, protect their environments, promote food security, and encourage use of green infrastructure.
- To promote the implementation of the region's key sustainability plan, Our Next Future: An Action Plan for Building a Smart, Sustainable and Resilient Pioneer Valley.
- To encourage sustainability in all aspects of life in the Pioneer Valley region.



This overall Sustainability Toolkit consists of five topic-specific toolkits:

- Smart Growth
- Environment
- Climate Action and Clean Energy
- Food Security
- Green Infrastructure

The 854-page Toolkit includes a total of 116 fact sheets that explain how each sustainability strategy works, plus 49 model bylaws, policies, and strategies that provide templates for communities to tailor their own specific outcomes.

According to PVPC Chief Planner and project coordinator Christopher Curtis, "the Toolkit can be used by anyone, but is designed specifically for community officials to help cities and towns take constructive steps toward becoming more sustainable." PVPC suggests that communities can use the Toolkit most effectively by following these steps:

## 1. Explore the Strategies

Communities are encouraged to explore the wide range of sustainability strategies included in the Toolkit and to select strategies that are appropriate to their needs, their community size and character, and their municipal capabilities.

## 2. Study the Fact Sheets

Read the fact sheets carefully to gain a better understanding of the strategies, their goals, and how they work.

## 3. Use the Model Bylaws, Ordinances, and Policies

The model bylaws, ordinances, and policies provided in the toolkit can provide a helpful starting point for developing a community strategy. However, it is necessary for each community to craft its own bylaw or ordinance language that fits the community and is melded to the existing community zoning bylaw/ordinance or other existing policies.

#### **4. Ask for More Help, If Needed**

To complement this toolkit, the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission also offers a number of technical assistance programs whereby communities can request help in implementing strategies from this toolkit and receive targeted assistance from a professional planner.

This project was funded through several funding sources, including a Sustainable Communities Initiative grant from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, received in partnership with the Capitol Region Council of Governments (CRCOG); a Targeted Watersheds grant from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency; and a Unified Planning Work Program grant from the Massachusetts Department of Transportation.

For more information about strategies in this toolkit, please contact the Land Use and Environment section of the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission at (413) 781-6045 or visit [www.pvpc.org](http://www.pvpc.org).