

## Recommendation to determine, track and review North Port's Environmental Health (EH)

North Port, like many fast growing communities, needs to find the appropriate balance between development and environmental health. While development metrics are measured and promoted on a regular basis (population, building permits, business licenses, etc.), Environmental Health metrics are practically non-existent for North Port. In fact if you asked any number of city officials/employees "How would you rate North Port's Environment Health?" you would most likely get any number of qualitative/subjective answers, but be hard pressed to find a comprehensive fact based response. It would be akin to having a medical checkup without any of the metrics needed to determine your personal health. For North Port to achieve the appropriate balance of development and Environmental Health the city needs to objectively measure, track and review the Environmental Health of the city.

In accordance with the Environmental Advisory Board's (EAB) charter the EAB recommends North Port creates and publishes a quarterly Environmental Health scorecard. The scorecard should include measurable targets and results for the following categories:

- Air quality
- Water quality (drinking and open water bodies i.e. canals, creeks and rivers)
- Tree canopy
- Wildlife habitat and protection
- Compliance with state and federal environmental regulations
- *Grants and incentives applied for and received relating to the preservation and health of the city's environment and wildlife habitat*

The EAB also recommends an annual review of North Port's Environmental Health, with the appropriate city personnel, elected officials and public, based on the results of the previous year's scorecards.

According to the Environmental Resiliency & Sustainability portion of North Port's 2022-25 Strategic Plan:

"North Port seeks to be the role model in the region as a community that values environmental resiliency and sustainability in the design and operation of its facilities, programs, services, and development through forward-thinking policies, ordinances, and education."

With the new addition of a Natural Resources Division this recommendation seems timely as a way to measure not only North Port's Environmental Health but also the new division's effectiveness as we embrace becoming a regional role model.