

declaration of **interdependence**

We the citizens of the Dayton region believe quality of life is dependent on the interconnection of individuals, their environment, and opportunities to thrive. The Dayton region has long been a haven of innovation, creativity and compassion – with well-known accomplishments in technology, the arts, peacemaking and human services. We have the capacity to create a sustainable future that is mutually-beneficial to commerce, the environment, the people of the region and their governments.

We currently see great threats to our region:

- Our urbanized area continues to expand while the population stagnates.
- Our communities are increasingly segregated by income and race.
- Our children are especially affected by poverty, with nearly a third of primary students eligible for free lunch.
- Our region continues to lose jobs and money at an alarming rate.
- Our numerous local governments, as well as human services providers, arts, civic, educational and charitable organizations compete for declining resources.
- Our environment – the quality and quantity of both urban and suburban water, green space and air – is in danger.

Democratic government cannot address these threats without clear direction from its citizens. **Grassroots Greater Dayton is the emerging voice of a citizen call to action for a season of growth and development in the spirit of the Dayton region. We call for:**

- All citizens to add their voice to a region-wide “conservation conversation,” focusing on how we should grow.
- Leaders of commerce to share best practices for sustainable business growth and to help apply them to management of our shared environmental and economic resources.
- Spiritual leaders to motivate us on the theme of stewardship and equity. What does it mean to be a brotherhood and sisterhood of human beings? To be a good steward of the natural world?
- Artists to create projects that inspire us to discover beauty and purpose in every part of our shared space.
- Civic leaders to design a regional plan for sharing governmental resources across our communities. We applaud those who already have begun these partnerships.
- Educational leaders to study and teach the economic and ethical benefits of sustainable development, environmental stewardship, and caring for neighbors throughout the region.
- Landowners and developers to redirect their resources from new development and focus on redevelopment of our region’s infrastructure.
- All citizens to work with our region’s farmers and local food network to grow our region’s ability to feed itself.
- All citizens, corporate citizens and civic servants to create micro-environments of sustainability around their homes and businesses, resulting in a region that can uphold and support those of us who are here, and those who will be attracted to our community’s beauty, strength and ability to re-create itself.

Our belief systems, scientific theories, our histories, as well as our current experience as a community all demonstrate that each person’s well-being – and the land we stand on – is interconnected. We therefore declare that working together to create a sustainable future is the only acceptable scenario for our region. We call for the adoption of this Dayton Declaration of Interdependence, with those citizens who sign accepting accountability to develop and drive this season of growth, culminating in a common plan for the best use of collective resources: Now is the time to cooperate and design a Greater Dayton for those who already share this time and place, and for those who will come to honor our commitment to a sustainable future for all.