Government Operations Greenhouse Gas Emissions Inventory

Cities, counties, and universities all generate carbon emissions in the course of their operations, from the conventionally generated electricity they use to the fossil-fueled vehicles they employ. Reducing these emissions by improving energy efficiency and switching to renewable energy sources is essential, but you can't gauge progress without first knowing where you're starting from. Greenhouse Gas (GHG) inventories establish a baseline for the size of an entity's carbon footprint, against which the success of a reduction action plan may be measured. Inventories can cost from tens to hundreds of thousands of dollars, though. Read on for strategies to help lower the cost of inventories, and shepherd your city, county or university through this important process.

a. **Solutions:**
    i. Join a membership structured organization such as ICLEI USA.
    ii. Collaborate with other member municipalities to establish a cost sharing agreement, reducing overall costs associated with establishing a GHG inventory.
    iii. Partner with local universities and utilities to establish a data sharing program agreement to offset GHG inventory costs.
b. **Goals:**
    i. Establish a government operations GHG emissions baseline in order to assess progress in GHG emission reduction.
    ii. Build relationships with municipalities that have comparable GHG emissions baselines and share best practices. Engage the public on conservation efforts using science based, quantitative data established by the GHG inventory.
    iii. Based on data collected during the inventory process, the municipality can identify the scope of sustainability action plan needed, develop cost estimates and apply for federal, state and local grant funding.
c. **Program Elements:**
    i. Group (multiple municipalities) training in GHG data capture techniques and reporting.
    ii. Identify a lead staffer responsible for reporting progress and with program oversight authority.
    iii. Develop a transparency provision within the proposed program that mandates public access to the GHG inventory via county/city website.
d. **Financing:**
    i. Comes from taxes allotted for federal, city, and or county respectively.

e. Possible Protocol

i. ICLEI USA has developed a standard protocol for identifying and reporting GHG emissions for local governments. http://icleiusa.org/ghg-protocols/

f. County and City Members of a Greenhouse Gas Inventory

Broward County, FL (Pop. 1.9 million)
City of Clearwater, FL (Pop. 100,000+)
City of Davie, FL (Pop. 90,000+)
City of Deerfield Beach, FL (Pop. 80,000+)
City of Delray Beach, FL (Pop. 65,000+)
City of Dunedin, FL (Pop. 35,000+)
City of Winter Park, FL (Pop. 30,000+)
City of Wilton Manors, FL (Pop. 11,000+)
City of West Palm Beach, FL (Pop. 100,000+)
City of Tallahassee, FL (Pop. 190,000+)
City of Surfside, FL (Pop. 5,000+)
City of Sunrise, FL (Pop. 94,000+)
City of Orlando, FL (Pop. 300,000+)
City of Oakland, FL (Pop. 2,000+)
City of North Miami, FL (Pop. 63,000+)
City of Miami, FL (Pop. 460,000+)
Manatee County, FL (Pop. 380,000+)
Miami-Dade County, FL (Pop. 2.7 million+)
City of Fort Lauderdale, FL (Pop. 180,000+)
City of Key West, FL (Pop. 25,000+)
City of Pinecrest, FL (Pop. 18,000+)
City of South Miami, FL (Pop. 12,000+)

g. Model Ordinances

i. One example of a membership greenhouse gas emission inventory organization is ICLEI. ICLEI has been recognized by the United Nations for their work; see more here.