

CHICAGO SUSTAINABILITY TASK FORCE

The Chicago Sustainability Task Force has developed this set of recommendations based on our collective policies, procedures and experiences that have led to the success and ongoing improvement of our sustainability programs and initiatives.

CHICAGO SUSTAINABILITY GUIDELINES [10/1/15]

Strategic Planning

- 1) Identify your baseline + key data points
 - a) Benchmark through a site assessment and waste /purchasing / process audit
 - b) Confirm local infrastructure: processing facilities and markets for the recycling of single-use items and processing of organics/compostables
- 2) Set Long term and short term goals
 - i) Identify attainable milestones, and incremental steps to get there
 - ii) Communicate goals to stakeholders
- 3) Designate sustainability leadership
 - a) A point person to lead the initiative and be held accountable
 - i) Internal= Someone within the organization, with authority, desire and bandwidth to champion this effort
 - ii) External= A consultant or outside sustainability lead, reporting to an internal manager, bringing experience and accelerating the learning curve
 - b) Develop a Green Team of environmentally conscious employees at all levels, to move initiatives forward and instill a culture of sustainability
- 4) Embed sustainability in operational protocol
 - a) Update standard operating procedures to reflect environmental efficiency measures
 - i) Finding efficiencies through improved practices, separate handling of each waste stream, incentivized sustainability goals
 - b) Training materials should be created and updated to provide ongoing reminders of expectations... what to do, and why. Remember:
 - i) Landfill is a cost to all
 - ii) Recycling creates a commodity that is valuable in the markets and that should lead to reduced Fees or rebates
 - iii) Composting can put valuable nutrients back into the soil
- 5) Responsible sourcing to prevent/reduce waste
 - a) Reduce & Reuse: Rent/borrow or buy used materials before purchasing new. Opt for reusable serveware vs single-use and water service vs plastic bottles
 - b) Recycle & Compost: Align single-use items with existing infrastructure and identify what is considered contamination by the facilities receiving your recycling and compost streams

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- c) Seek LOCAL products, use recyclables with RECYCLED CONTENT...**
- 6) Ensure contract specify requirements aligned with expectations/reporting needs
 - a) Incentivize partners through key performance indicators in a contract
- 7) Track performance through required reporting and goal-oriented analysis
 - a) Develop systems to receive specified data in a timely, simplified manner
 - b) Use technology to advance speed and accuracy of data management
- 8) Simplify
 - a) Start off simple and grow the program. Recognize each success, and build on it with every milestone / step / phase.
 - b) Color code streams for visual communication front-of-house and easier sorting back-of-house (e.g. for labels and can liners - recycle in transparent blue or clear, compost in green, and landfill in black)
 - c) Identify the "most attractive low hanging fruit" - those changes that are the easiest to implement, with the greatest impact (e.g. cardboard recycling – ideally separating, baling and marketing it)
 - d) Back to Basics: Use your customized goals and sustainability plan as a handy reference or communication and training tool.

Communication

- 1) Identify and engage all stakeholders: Start by connecting and collaborating with all involved parties, such as:
 - a) Venue Operator
 - i) Personnel in each department that manage or execute practices or procurement decisions involving use or disposal of goods and resources
 - b) Employees and Internal Partners
 - i) Schedule training sessions, reminders, lunch & learns; stay top-of-mind
 - ii) Explain **why** new initiatives are taking place (shared green benefits!)
 - iii) Bilingual signage with photos strengthens understanding
 - c) Maintenance Contractor
 - i) Account representatives AND on-the-ground managers of cleaning crews
 - ii) Bilingual education/training when necessary
 - d) Vendors and Concessionaires
 - i) Align purchasing decisions (serviceware, supplies) with program/goals
 - ii) Link to environmental initiatives & personnel of partner companies/brands
 - iii) Engage distributors and manufacturers with ample lead time
 - e) Waste (Recycling, Composting, Baling) Hauler
 - i) Advising on right-sized containers and service schedule for each stream
 - ii) Accurate reporting, as expected, or required by contract
 - iii) Providing verifiable chain-of-custody for each stream
 - f) Third-Party Partners
 - i) Sponsors, non-profits, consultants, resource/governmental agencies...
 - g) Public / Fans / Customers / Facility Population
 - i) Use visually appealing, directional signage to inform and educate them on

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“what goes where” and the significance of the program

- ii) Strengthen engagement using video monitors, public announcements and promotions involving players, artists or other cultural/venue leaders
- 2) Remind, Retain, Re-train, Recognize: Monitor activity to maintain sustainability standards. Communicate issues and strategize solutions. Retain great partners. Repeat and review expectations. Identify challenges and celebrate successes.

Paving the Road to Zero Waste

- 1) Be Responsive
 - a) Identify changes and adapt program to optimize results.
- 2) Tracking
 - a) Manage key data reports monthly (e.g. attendance, sales, purchasing, weights by stream, transport/processing costs by stream, rebates)
 - b) Schedule quarterly meetings to analyze impacts, variances and trends
- 3) Auditing
 - a) Maintain awareness of changes in partners’ management of material, recycling markets, composting infrastructure
 - b) Observe activities, talk to management, ensure adoption of new standard operating procedures
- 4) Promotion / Recognition / Education
 - a) Share your successes with local leaders, sponsors, vendors and fans
 - b) Publicize your efforts; attract and influence others
 - c) Share your thanks with the key partners that helped you get there
 - d) Apply for awards
 - e) Take the opportunity to **teach** the benefits of sustainable practices
 - f) Lead by example, align with broadening public environmental goals, communicate ideas to inspire new behavior, and foster change in the consciousness of the community at large!

CHICAGO SUSTAINABILITY GUIDELINES ARE AVAILABLE ONLINE AT:

<http://www.chicagosustainabilitytaskforce.org/resources/>

LEARN MORE ABOUT THE CHICAGO SUSTAINABILITY TASK FORCE AT:

<http://www.chicagosustainabilitytaskforce.org>

The Chicago Sustainability Guidelines were developed with help from CSTF Founding Members:
Allstate Arena | Beat Kitchen | Bright Beat | Chicago Department of Aviation | Chicago Department of Streets & Sanitation | Chicago Event Management-Bank of America Chicago Marathon | Chicago Park District | Chicago Public Schools | City of Chicago | Cook County Department of Environmental Control | Cook County Sheriff’s Office | Goose Island Beer Company | Green Music Fest | Illinois Sustainable Technology Center | Loyola University Chicago | MB Financial Park at Rosemont | McCormick Place-SAVOR... Chicago | Navy Pier-Chicago Signature Services | Soldier Field | United Airlines | University of Illinois at Chicago | US-EPA Region