

IRVINGTON, NY SUSTAINABLE EVENTS GUIDE

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HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

This guide has been developed to satisfy portions of the requirements of the New York State Climate Smart Communities Program, Pledge Element 5 Climate Smart Materials Management with the goals of reducing the carbon footprint of our community by promoting and applying the principles of a circular economy at events and in public places in Irvington, NY.

The purpose of the guide is to provide recommendations for organizing environment-friendly, sustainable events. The guide should help the potential users by proposing measures in the areas of event promotion, energy and water consumption, communication, catering, merchandising, waste reduction, and resource separation.

Public events, such as sport competitions, expos, or festivals, in Irvington could leave a significant environmental footprint – by consuming energy, water and other natural resources, generating waste, causing air pollution, and indirectly contributing to soil and water pollution and climate change through greenhouse gas emissions.

Public events have the potential, however, to **leave a positive legacy** in addressing the global sustainability challenges. By taking an overarching and comprehensive approach, this guide challenges organizers to consider not only the effects of the event on attendees and companies, but also on the environment, economy, and society.

Public events in Irvington could:

1. Raise public awareness about Irvington's achievements and goals for sustainability;
2. Disseminate information on how individuals in the community can support and further the Village's efforts;
3. Promote sustainability in line with the 2030 Agenda; and
4. Leave a beneficial legacy for the host community and all involved.

The guide consists of general information on sustainability and the criteria for sustainable events planning and organization with practical examples and tips. Information is compiled from multiple sources.

WHAT IS SUSTAINABILITY?

One of the most repeated definitions of sustainability comes from the United Nations (UN) World Commission on Environment and Development:

“Sustainable development is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.”¹

Sustainable development is more than environmental protection and climate action. It is the result of an approach that sees the environment, economy, and social affairs as equal, mutually connected areas of life. The UN launched the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development as a global initiative adopted by all the United Nations member states in 2015. The **Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)** are the heart of the Agenda, addressing global challenges like poverty, inequality, climate change, environmental degradation, peace, and justice.

GOALS FOR EVENTS IN IRVINGTON

ZERO-WASTE

The goal of zero-waste is for all materials to be constantly recycled, often changing their purpose as they move through the cycle. A zero-waste event aims to design waste out of the system, improving the management of material flows so that all materials used at an event can keep being useful in the future. What was surplus in one part of a system becomes food or fuel in another part of the system.

“A zero-waste event is not accomplished by merely adding recycling and composting bins. The key to a zero-waste event is careful planning so that all materials used and discarded are reused, recycled or composted.”

It can be hard to organize a zero-waste event, especially for communities that are new to zero-waste concepts. As communities begin the learning process, however, organizers should preemptively introduce measures to reduce waste **in the system** and take care to not miss any opportunity to promote and raise awareness at the event. **Every action counts, from relying on tap water instead of plastic bottles to encouraging use of public transport. You might find that it also helps you cut unnecessary costs.** Adopting a flexible approach means that it can be used for all types of events, from music festivals to school outings.

EDUCATION, CLEAR AND SIMPLE

By applying the learning-by-doing approach, organizers can not only ensure immediate savings, but also enable longer-term behavioral changes. In this engagement exercise, however,

¹ United Nations Academic Impact: Sustainability <https://www.un.org/en/academic-impact/sustainability>

organizers must **avoid turning this into a burden for the attendees**, because this would achieve the opposite effect. It is crucial to provide the attendees with appropriate, timely and clear instructions on what to do and why. Organizers should ensure that all the efforts to reduce water and energy consumption (including food waste) are announced – they should also encourage the attendees to do the same and **reward them, if possible**.

COMMUNICATION

Communication is a crucial part of promoting sustainability. When communicating with stakeholders, the organizers should always present clear strategies, reasons, and sustainability goals from contracts with vendors and performers, to tickets and banners, to thank you for coming signage/emails/social. **Potential suppliers should be involved in the early planning stages so as to influence procurement decisions or introduce sustainable and green procurement procedures into the event organization.** This is a crucial element of awareness-raising and knowledge-building, which will disseminate to the attendees.

Communication is crucial for the success of sustainable events, from planning and implementation, to reporting. In each phase of event management, it requires thoughtful messages adjusted to the needs of the audience and the event's purpose. Being the driver of change, the communication strategy for a sustainable event should aim not only to pass the message, but also to contribute to education and persuasion, building awareness and understanding among the actors and partners involved.

COMMUNICATE THE GOAL AND EXPECTED/REALIZED POSITIVE IMPACTS

PRE-EVENT PUBLICITY

Pre-event publicity campaigns can include the following message:

We are striving to make this a zero-waste event with the goal of 90%+ waste diversion. Please consider walking or biking to this event. And, don't forget your reusable water bottle! Bicycle parking will be available [STATE LOCATION].

Incorporate waste diversion messages by using:

- An official event website
- An official event Facebook Event page
- An official event printed material (flier, poster, postcard, etc.) made from recycled content

- Other publicity through Twitter, YouTube, press-releases, newsletters, ads, etc.

DURING EVENT PUBLICITY

Include the following message during your event to showcase diversion efforts:

“[Event Name] is helping to reduce our impact on the environment by diverting at least (50% or 75%) of our resources from the landfill. Help us reduce waste by using the Away Stations around this event to compost and recycle.
Thank you for contributing to a greener Irvington!”

Provide signage at all Away Stations

- Create a Sustainable Practices Pavilion or booth with information and activities about event diversion efforts (e.g. **a game showing how to dispose items at the event**)
- Banner (not one-time-only use, made from recycled and recyclable material)
- Regular Stage/PA announcements
- Stamp patrons' hands on entry with a recycle logo to remind them!
- Other methods (e.g. mascot, flash mob, **stage game helping attendees learn correct sorting methods**)

- Sample Zero-Waste Education Sign:



discarded materials are designed to become resources for others to use."
- Zero Waste International Alliance

Key components:

- ❖ *Source Reduction*: Eliminating waste at the source, before it is created.
- ❖ *Product Stewardship*: Selecting materials with their best end-use in mind. In other words, if materials cannot be reused, recycled, or composted, these materials should not be used.
- ❖ *Recycling*: Processing used materials into new products to divert waste from the landfill.
- ❖ *Composting*: Turning organics such as food scraps, yard waste, and paper back into soil that can then be used to grow new plants and crops.
- ❖ *Liquids*: Diverting liquid from the landfill by collecting it beforehand. This helps to prevent groundwater contamination by chemical leachates and also helps to keep pests out of the landfill.

Why Zero Waste?

- ❖ The linear model of consumerism (extracting virgin resources for products and packaging, using these resources, and then discarding them to landfills or incinerators) is a primary cause of global environmental problems, including climate change, resource depletion, and associated environmental, climate, and social problems.
- ❖ Nearly half of all U.S. landfills are full or have been closed because of groundwater contamination (leachate), methane emissions, other greenhouse gas leaks, and groundwater pollution), high operating and maintenance costs, inadequate landfill closing accountability, and resistance to siting new landfills near sites.
- ❖ To achieve a sustainable system of managing our resources, communities must implement a system that follows nature's law, **waste = food**, and channel materials into re-use and new production.

<http://www.davisvoice.com>

<http://www.carolinagreenfair.com>

POST-EVENT PUBLICITY

Thank you for coming! We had so much fun and hope you did too! We diverted [] of resources away from the incinerator and to recycling and composting facilities in our area. *[Review talking points from the above poster.]* Looking to add sustainability practices in your home? Visit: irvingtongreen.org for all the latest information.



PLANNING SUSTAINABLE EVENTS

Proper, timely, and careful event planning and communications are crucial for success. For an event to succeed, organizers must plan it in advance, consider various issues and challenges, and engage in timely and informed communication with all stakeholders. **The critical step is that executive management or decision-makers commit to this process.** Furthermore, it is necessary to ensure clear procedures and policies, and to understand the various groups of people included in or affected by the event; these are event organizers and owners, other sponsors, senior management, workforce, volunteers, suppliers, participants, attendees, and the wider audience.

The initial phase of event management should be to inspire and trigger changes through informed communication with decision-makers, executives, employees, volunteers, and potential suppliers and vendors – explaining exactly what is expected of them in terms of sustainability and supporting them to meet the desired sustainability objectives. Organizers can take a step-by-step approach, and at first organize events that will include only some sustainable elements. Small changes can be introduced, focusing on one or two elements, like reducing the use of materials or recycling materials. Then, for subsequent events, aspirations and measures can be further expanded.

The step-by-step approach in sustainable event management is especially interesting for Irvington and the regions where social and environmental awareness is still limited in the general population, and where there are obvious market limitations in terms of environment-friendly products or socially responsible companies. Promoting and implementing activities that reduce the negative impact of events may become a driving force in Irvington, resulting in perspective and behavior changes not only among event organizers but also among suppliers, supporting businesses, participants, policymakers, and the wider public.

When applying the step-by-step approach, organizers should start with small-scale events, like staff gatherings, working lunches and steering committee meetings, and then gradually expand the scope to external events, providing positive examples and contributing to the global environmental and climate goals. By applying simple basic steps, organizers can introduce the minimum standards in event organization, kick-start the future process, and demonstrate the differences that could be made by following more and more sustainable practices.

KEY COMPONENTS OF ZERO WASTE

SOURCE REDUCTION

Eliminates waste at its source. This includes choosing products that come with little or no packaging, such as beer kegs instead of bottles, or other types of bulk items. Source reduction also eliminates unnecessary items like frilly toothpicks, paper doilies, and inedible garnishes. Product stewardship is an important part of source reduction and emphasizes selecting

materials with their best end use in mind (i.e. if materials cannot be reused, recycled, or composted, then these materials should not be purchased or used).

MERCHANDISING

Before the event, organizers should carefully consider if the promotional materials are absolutely necessary, and if they can be distributed online, partially or completely.

It is important that organizers apply the sustainability criteria in planning and designing promotional activities, materials, merchandising, and other tools that will be used at the event. All distributed items should be aligned with the concept of sustainability, climate-smart energy and environment-friendly products, which opens a lot of space for creativity and innovation.

If it is not possible to have an event without any printed material, organizers should reassess the needs and reduce the number of printouts. For printing, organizers should use either recycled paper or paper produced from sustainably managed forests.

Promote smartly:

- Limit the number of give-aways.
- Use eco-friendly and useful promo gifts such as plant seeds or create, design and distribute items made from reusable and recyclable materials that can demonstrate sustainability and achieve substantial environmental benefits.
- Instead of pre-filled goodie bags, allow people to select only the items they actually want.
- Engage local and small producers or social entrepreneurs.
- Highlight sustainability additionally and promote sustainability of the products.
- Choose items that can be reused at the next event

RECYCLING

Recycling is the processing of used materials into new products to divert waste from the landfill. Recycling helps to conserve natural resources, reduce air and water pollution, generate less solid waste, and reduce the year-to-year costs of extracting and manufacturing new products.

ORGANICS RECYCLING

Also called composting, this form of recycling turns food scraps, yard waste, and paper back into soil that can be used to grow new plants and crops. Organics account for a significant component of solid waste. Furthermore, the mixing of organics with traditional waste at landfills generates an immediate combustion of methane, a greenhouse gas that is 110 times more potent in the near term (over a 20-year period) than carbon dioxide, making food residual diversion an important global warming mitigation strategy.

LIQUID DIVERSION

Diverts liquid from the landfill by collecting it beforehand. This helps to prevent groundwater contamination by chemical leachates and also keeps pests out of dumpsters.

THE VENUE

The amount of energy and resources used to prepare and conduct an event is an important element in ensuring event sustainability. When selecting the event location, organizers should see if it is possible to use natural, open spaces.

Upon deciding that a physical event (as opposed to an even more sustainable virtual event) will be held, organizers must select the venue in line with the various sustainability criteria. In short, when selecting the venue:

- Central location and/or easy access by public transport or alternative transportation (bike, walking),
- Energy efficiency and energy savings by holding the event outdoors to make use of natural light.

MOBILITY AND TRANSPORT OF ATTENDEES

Travel is the main source of emissions generated during an event, which is why selecting the event location requires special attention. The selected destination should be centrally located, so that attendees may “meet-in-the-middle.” Organizers should select the location based on the participants’ possibility to use environment-friendly modes of transport, such as walking, biking or public transport (preferably by train or bus). At the same time, organizers should encourage performers and vendors to use electric or hybrid cars, bicycles, and public transport.

The parking space for bicycles and electric scooters, or the availability of chargers for electric/hybrid vehicles at the location should also be taken into consideration. Organizers should also promote and support carpooling or car-sharing. They might also consider organizing mass/joint transport for attendees to/from the venue or incentivize the use of alternative means of transportation.

PREVENTING EVENT WASTE

Events tend to generate immense amounts of waste. Organizers need to consider what they are buying, how the amounts can be reduced, for what purposes it can be reused, and how it can be disposed of. This is important for events, especially the large-scale ones, since they can generate significant amounts of waste, particularly plastic and food. When planning an event, organizers can make smart choices to decrease the amount of waste by refusing wasteful, pollution-generating products (like single-use or individually packed items, or those in plastic wraps, boxes, and cartons). In addition, they can reduce the number of printouts, and promotional and merchandising items, and select goods and products that can be recycled or

reused or serve as a resource for future events. In the event preparation phase, organizers should implement the paperless principle, i.e. electronic dissemination for the following activities:

- informing, inviting or confirming (RSVP) participation,
- promotion and registration,
- preparation and dissemination of agendas,
- maps, background materials and/or other necessary information and logistic details,
- e-ticketing.

Follow the principle of minimal waste generation at the event. **Eliminate the usage of all single-use items like plastic bags, spoons, bottles or cups, and replace them with reusable or compostable alternatives.** Alternatives to single-use materials are glass bottles, water containers, textile or paper bags, and low carbon impact compostable, plant-based tableware. Make smart choices when planning and procuring items and food for the event. Avoid excessive or single-use packaging and all one time used items.

Zero-waste information packet:

Provide an information packet to all vendors/caterers regarding the event's recycling and composting plans. This sheet should outline the benefits of zero-waste, as well as your expectations and guidelines for vendors participating in the event. It should emphasize the importance of source reduction and waste minimization as a first step when planning a zero-waste event. The packet should also include a list of acceptable items and food guidelines for your event.

List of acceptable items:

This portion of the information packet should include a list of acceptable products and supplier information, as well as a list of prohibited materials, such as polystyrene (Styrofoam), plastic water bottles, plastic cups or plastic utensils. This list should be provided even if the event is providing these supplies. The list should prioritize reusable products, followed by compostable or recyclable products. When listing preferred recyclable materials, items made from post-consumer recycled content should be prioritized. This list should indicate an event ban on non-recyclable and non-compostable products, such as plastic bags and wraps, as well as single-use plastic water bottles and polystyrene (Styrofoam).

Food guidelines:

The information packet should also include any food guidelines for your event. Below are some areas to consider incorporating into your event food guidelines.

- Consider how you can ensure that food at your event is not only consumed and disposed of in a sustainable way (“front of the house” operations), but is also prepared in an environmentally-friendly and waste-minimizing way (“back of the house” operations). For example, you can ask that caterers recycle any cooking oil and charcoal used for making event food.
- Consider choosing caterers that provide bite-size or finger foods that don't require utensils, and use entrees that can be served in large containers. However, be aware that buffet-style food serving can actually generate more waste, as people are more apt to load up their plates. What method of food containment do you think will best suit your event? Weigh the benefits and costs of different food serving set-ups.
- Require that vendors/caterers provide drinks and condiments (water, tea, sugars, ketchup, salad dressings, etc.) in bulk instead of in individual packages and servings, so that they can be used with reusable cups and containers. If drinks or condiments cannot be provided in bulk, require that vendors/caterers buy those that are sold in compostable or recyclable containers.
- Ask that vendors/caterers serve fewer meat, dairy, and greasy food items, as these are less easily compostable, and in the larger picture, take a greater toll on the environment than other types of food. Also encourage caterers to serve local, organic, and sustainable food whenever possible.

Signed zero-waste contract for a Food Vendor:

Ask vendors/caterers to sign a contract based on your agreed-upon event materials, food, and recycling and composting guidelines. The below bullets are example contract requirements:

“Zero-waste policies for the event are: no bottled or canned beverages may be served; all supplies used must be reusable, recyclable or compostable; event sorting bins must be used accordingly for disposing of waste.”

“Vendors must use locally grown, organic ingredients wherever possible in event servings. Vendors are asked to provide local, organic farms/supplier names for publication in event program and signage.”

Signed zero-waste contract for a Non-Food Vendor:

During the event, organizers must impose and additionally emphasize the principle of resource separation. In addition to ensuring recycling, they should use the opportunity to educate the wider public about disposable materials and resource management. Since large-scale events generate large amounts of waste, these events are the perfect opportunity to demonstrate the waste reduction and recycling practices.

Dear Vendor:

Thank you for your interest in participating at [event name]! We are proud to announce that this event will be a Zero Waste event. The goal at a Zero Waste event is to plan ahead and distribute only materials that are recyclable or compostable (not any materials that will be landfilled). “Away Stations” consisting of recycling, compost and liquid collection containers will be available to participants at numerous locations throughout [the event venue]. As a vendor handing out products at this event, you play a vital part in the success of our Zero Waste initiative.

Vendors attending [event name] are required to hand out only recyclable, compostable or reusable materials. Remember, if an item is not recyclable locally, we cannot recycle it, even if your supplier has told you it can be recycled. If you have any questions as to whether your items are considered recyclable or compostable, please call [event Zero Waste Leader name and contact number]. We will answer your questions and help you understand your important role in this Zero Waste event. Please note that you will be asked to remove any non-recyclable or non-compostable items from your booth for the duration of the event. You will only be allowed to distribute recyclable or compostable products.

Your signature on the vendor application acknowledges that you will abide by all Zero Waste guidelines and requirements. Our Zero Waste goal is simple to attain if you plan ahead of time the kinds of materials you will be providing to the public at the event. Here are some ideas that can help you achieve this goal:

- *Use the least amount of packaging possible or remove the packaging before distributing the item.*
- *Use compostable “goodie” bags rather than plastic bags.*
- *Use post-consumer (preferred) or recycled content paper for flyers, programs and handouts. Choose to print on paper with the highest recycled content you can find.*
- *Do not use “neon” fluorescent or dark-colored papers. These cannot be recycled.*
- *Do not use kraft or goldenrod (orange-brownish envelopes)*
- *Candy wrappers, energy bars, chip bags and packaging from pre-packaged food are landfill items.*

We cannot compost or recycle CANDY WRAPPERS of any kind. Please consider the health of our participants and the environment and avoid including individually wrapped candy at your booth. Thank you for supporting our Zero Waste goal and we look forward to working with you to make this a successful Zero Waste event.

RESOURCE WRANGLING

For large-scale events like festivals, sporting events and concerts, where significant amounts of waste can be generated in a short time, organizers should have a dedicated team that will inform and educate the visitors, but also collect, empty and sort the resources that tend to pile up quickly.

RESOURCE RECOVERY STATIONS:

These are what you might consider “waste” sorting stations at a zero-waste event or venue. At a zero-waste event there is no such thing as a waste bin or trash can. You'll only find an Away Station, a fully-loaded sorting center complete with collection bins for all types of recyclable items, compostable and organic items, and the little waste that cannot be reused, recycled, or composted. **All stations should be set up exactly the same for visual continuity.**



Determine the number of sorting stations needed using the following formula:

# Attendees	<100	100-500	500-1000	1000-5000	5000-10,000
Recommended # of Stations	1-3	3-5	5-8	8-12	12-15

Procuring Supplies for the Away Stations

As with the signs and order of containers at the stations, consistency is key with other supplies. The same signs and the same color bags should be used consistently throughout the venue so that guests can have this as an additional visual cue.

The Irvington Green Policy Task Force (GPTF) has already procured many supplies needed through the Village Administrator's Office. The Village Administrator purchased a large 10' x 3'

banner, a 10' x 10' pop-up tent, grabbers to sort misplaced materials, gloves for volunteers, bins and containers for collecting the various materials, hand sanitizer, and a scale. The Irvington Recreation and Parks Department and Department of Public Works have many other supplies which they gladly share with the Green Policy Task Force volunteers. Email addresses for these departments are available on the Village website at: <https://www.irvingtonny.gov/Directory.aspx>

Bags

Color-coded bags help guests properly sort their discards. They also help volunteers collect bags and bring them to the correct hauling destinations. Consider using green or clear bags for compostables/organics, and black bags for landfill.

The Irvington Department of Public Works maintains a supply of black bags to use with black bins and green compostable bags to use with brown bins. Plastic bags are not used for Commingled Recycling (glass, plastic, cans) nor for Clean Paper Recycling. Recyclables should be collected in blue bins.

Signs

You will want two kinds of signs at your zero waste event:

1. **Sorting signs** at each Away Station will help guests know how to quickly and correctly sort their items.
 - a. Signage for sorting stations should be very basic and should match throughout your event venue – the focus should be on one large word (RECYCLING, COMPOST, LIQUID, LANDFILL).
 - b. In some events it may help to include photos of the items that go into each container if there are a limited number of items. Often, the signs can be simple and then the actual items can be taped to the containers to make it very easy for guests to know which items go where.
 - c. Consider laminating the signs, especially if you will have future zero waste events. Laminated signs are a lot less likely to get torn off your containers or get wet or messy.
 - d. In addition to procuring items needed for events, Irvington's Office of the Administrator is helpful in printing and laminating signs.

Example individual signs for containers, which have a space in the middle to overlay photos of items:



Example large sign for Away Station:



2. **Educational signs** about your zero waste event will also be used to explain why your event is zero waste and the impact this will have. Educational signs can be located on tables, bathroom doors, or anywhere else where you think guests might pause long enough to read a few facts.

Other Zero-Waste Supplies:

- ☐ Tent
- ☐ Tables
- ☐ Bins for three/four streams. (Compostables, Commingled, Clean Pulp, Trash)
- ☐ Bags for 2 streams (only trash and compostables) (recyclables should not be bagged)
- ☐ Containers to collect liquids
- ☐ Labels for 4 streams?
- ☐ Banner
- ☐ Gloves (reusable if possible)
- ☐ Tongs/Grabbers
- ☐ Hand Sanitizer / Paper Towels
- ☐ Water in Large Cooler for Volunteers
- ☐ Tape - heavy duty for taping materials and signs to bins
- ☐ Pens/markers
- ☐ Clipboards, pens
- ☐ Volunteer identification items (e.g. "Ask Me About Zero Waste" pins, t-shirts)
- ☐ Scale(s)
- ☐ Measuring sheets/templates
- ☐ Regular fliers and such (binder clips and strip of wood)
- ☐ Chairs for Volunteers

Here is an example of a typical site plan identifying all recycling and composting stations.

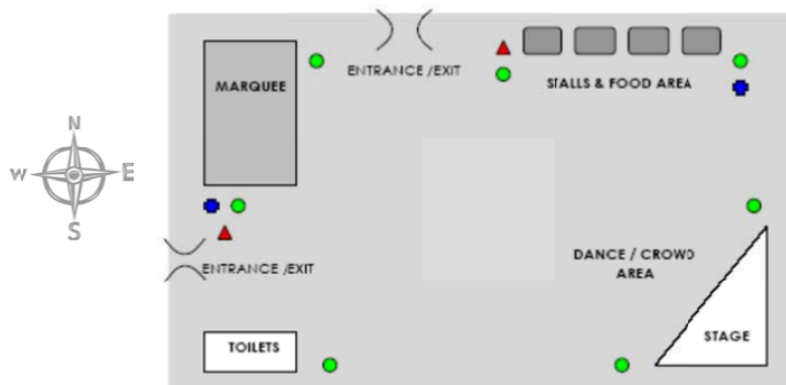


Figure 2: Example site map

- Refuse & Recycling Stations
- ▲ Information Points
- ★ First Aid Stations

VOLUNTEERS

Thank you for volunteering today!

Please review the roles below, including the one you've been assigned to, in order to familiarize yourself with the entire zero-waste event process.

ZERO-WASTE LEADER

The zero-waste Leader is responsible for overseeing the entire zero-waste component of the event. The leader should carry a clipboard with all important documents, such as the venue layout with plotted Away stations, the volunteer list with assigned positions, the sheet for measuring waste diversion, and the event schedule.

RESOURCE WRANGLER / STATION MONITOR

The Resource Wrangler/Station Monitor *gently* educates attendees on how to properly sort their items. (No shaming, please.) Each receptacle is designated to collect a particular waste stream (see signage). Make sure whatever item is being sorted goes into its proper receptacle. If an item isn't properly sorted, rescue that material (with gloves and/or grabbers provided!) and put it in its proper place. Encourage attendees to think about the benefits of recovering these valuable resources and the goal of a circular economy.

TALKING POINTS FOR ATTENDEES AND VENDORS/CATERERS

Q. What is Zero-Waste?

A. Zero-waste is a philosophy and a design principle for the 21st century. It includes reducing, reusing, recycling, and composting, but goes beyond that by taking a whole system approach to the vast flow of resources and waste through human society. Zero-waste reduces consumption, minimizes waste, maximizes recycling and composting, and ensures that products are made to be reused, repaired or recycled back into nature or the marketplace.

Q. How much of a difference will zero-waste really make?

A: Before this event was zero-waste, it created _____ pounds of garbage that was sent to the landfill. This year we will reduce that by 90%. Not only are we reducing the amount of waste sent to the landfill, thereby reducing air, soil, and water pollution, but we are also recovering valuable resources that can be repurposed for other uses. Food scraps are being used to create soil and feedstock, liquids go into the sewer to be cleaned, processed, and reused in our fresh water supply, and recycled materials prevent the need to extract new resources for new products. You can make a difference today by helping out.

Q: Why do these plates and cups go into the compost bin instead of recycling?

A: These items are made of _____ [corn, sugarcane bagasse, PLA, etc.] and can therefore be broken down by microorganisms into smaller and smaller parts, eventually becoming soil that can be used for growing more plants.

Q: Why is recycling better than throwing things away?

A: Recycling is better than throwing resources away because it: a) conserves natural resources by reducing our need to mine for raw, virgin materials, b) reduces energy consumption that would be necessary to manufacture new materials from scratch, and c) creates less air, soil, and water pollution than manufacturing new products and landfilling products we feel we no longer have a use for.

BAG RUNNER

The Bag Runner floats around to each station picking up full bags that are ready to be weighed. When checking each station, look within each receptacle to make sure streams aren't being contaminated. If items have been sorted improperly, rescue the material (with gloves!) and put it in its proper place.

1. When the bag is full, pull it out of its bin.
2. Replace the old bag with a new one (have one of each kind on you at all times).
3. On a label, write the station number that indicates where the bag came from, as well as the waste stream of the bag's contents (recyclable, compostable, landfill, etc.).
4. Look inside the bag to determine if there is contamination. If there is, sort the misplaced items into the proper receptacles.
5. Close the bag and attach a label that signifies from which station it came.
6. Bring the bag to the weigh station.
7. Then bring the bag to the end storage site to wait for hauler pick up.

MEASURING WASTE DIVERSION

RECEIVER

The Receiver receives all bags coming in to be weighed. If measuring distribution data, make sure the runner has put a label on the bag that signifies which station it came from. Check to make sure that the bag isn't contaminated. If it is, sort (with gloves!). If not, give the bag to the Weigher to be measured.

WEIGHER

The Weigher is in charge of the scale and making sure that all bags are weighed properly. He/she should report the data to the Recorder. After data is recorded, the weigher will discard the bags into the proper receptacles.

RECORDER

The Recorder is in charge of recording all data from the event on the [recording sheet provided](#). This includes weights and counts for all waste streams that will be measured. Recorder will know which streams require counts in addition to weights based on the recording sheet provided. Any questions should be directed to the Zero-Waste Leader.

FOOD AND WATER MANAGEMENT

Unused food is more than "just waste". Once sent to landfills, bio-waste releases greenhouse gasses such as methane, directly causing global warming. Besides that, all the energy used to produce such food is then also wasted. Minimizing food waste should be one of the event management goals.

Also, event organizers should consider, plan and implement strategies for bio-waste treatment and food surplus management during the event.

FOOD SURPLUS

By carefully planning food quantities, organizers can significantly reduce food surplus at events. The selection and amount of preordered food should be in line with the number and needs of attendees. The food selection and way of serving (small portions, finger food, fresh and local options) can reduce the unnecessary leftovers at events. Organizers can also see if and how food surplus can be donated, composted, or fed to livestock.

When there is a composting practice at the venue/location, the event's attendees should be educated and encouraged to separate food waste and support the composting efforts.

LESS IS MORE!

Plan your food at the event carefully, and resourcefully. Serve local, fresh and seasonal, avoid surpluses, and **enforce composting**.

When food is served, it is crucial to avoid the use of disposable items, reduce packaging, and ensure the appropriate collection and recycling or disposal of waste. When the knowledge on waste separation and composting is low, and the practice is underdeveloped as it is in Irvington, organizers should use every opportunity, including various events, to raise awareness and educate the event industry representatives, event attendees, the general public and other stakeholders.

How to manage food

- Plan meals carefully and based on the number of participants
- Engage local producers and farmers
- Use buffet style or finger food serving
- Compose menu containing healthy options like vegetarian or vegan food
- Avoid serving meat and fish
- Serve fresh and wholesome food like whole grains, vegetables and proteins
- Reduce food packaging
- Enhance separation of food waste
- Explore and arrange with local organizations specialized in distributing edible leftovers from events

WATER

In addition, organizers need to consider water consumption at the venue, in particular during the event. The participants should be encouraged to refill their water bottles at **hydration stations**. If there are no water-saving measures at the venue, organizers can, in cooperation with the event management, propose and introduce certain measures.

SUSTAINABLE EVENT STEPS (In a Nutshell)

Apply the principles of resource management: reduce, reuse, recycle, including food scrap recycling!

Communicate and Educate at every point of contact.

Do not use products that pollute the environment or may become waste.

Reduce the number of printed materials.

Avoid packaging. Eliminate single-use plastic altogether.

Communicate electronically.

Encourage water savings at the event.

Zero Waste Event Timeline and Checklist

BEFORE EVENT

Six months to one year before event

- ☐ Select a venue.
- ☐ Identify materials in the event waste stream.
- ☐ Research procurement opportunities for serviceware and zero waste equipment.
- ☐ Begin meeting with potential vendors and caterers.

Three to six months before event

- ☐ Decide which zero waste strategies you will employ at your event.
- ☐ Determine which materials you will use at your event (reusable, compostable, or recyclable).
- ☐ Create a zero waste information sheet, an acceptable items list, and a document containing food guidelines.
- ☐ Provide vendors and caterers with the information sheet, item list, and food guidelines.
- ☐ Finalize vendor and caterer event contracts.
- ☐ If applicable, purchase reusable or compostable service ware, or require that vendors provide and use reusable or compostable service ware.

Two to three months prior to event

- ☐ Send out attendee invitations.
- ☐ Begin marketing & publicity.
- ☐ Map venue and existing bins.
- ☐ Explore opportunities for procuring donated items.
- ☐ Select and purchase sorting bins and bags.
 - ☐ See DPW, Recreation & Parks, GPTF Coordinator, and/or Village Administrator if you need help procuring any items.
- ☐ Create signage to accompany sorting stations.
- ☐ Order additional zero waste equipment.
- ☐ Begin training staff and assemble your Zero Waste Team, including a Zero Waste Leader.
- ☐ Identify end-site locations and haulers.
- ☐ Identify zero waste goals for your event.
- ☐ Determine method(s) for measuring event diversion.
- ☐ Decide how you will showcase diversion success at the event.

One week prior to event

- ☐ If applicable, confirm donation pick-up.
- ☐ Confirm equipment delivery.
- ☐ Confirm hauler schedule.
- ☐ Print signage.
- ☐ Distribute zero waste procedure reminders to vendors and caterers.
- ☐ Provide staff and volunteers with all necessary informational materials.

DAY OF EVENT

- ☐ Train staff and volunteers and equip them with all materials and supplies.
- ☐ Set up sorting stations and weight station, if applicable.
- ☐ Place signage near and on containers.
- ☐ Tape sample items to collection containers.
- ☐ Place necessary supplies at each sorting station.
- ☐ Cover or remove existing bins if they are not part of the Away Stations.
- ☐ Hang/set up zero waste educational signs.
- ☐ Situate volunteers near sorting stations and highly trafficked areas.
- ☐ If applicable, allocate and deliver reusable/compostable/recyclable serving ware to vendors.
- ☐ Periodically remind attendees of zero waste guidelines through PA announcements.
- ☐ Monitor Away Stations and re-sort any contaminated bins.
- ☐ Empty and remove full sorting bins as needed.
- ☐ Measure and record diversion.
- ☐ Showcase diversion success.
- ☐ Train newly arrived volunteers and staff.
- ☐ Restock serving ware as needed.
- ☐ Conduct and record final diversion measurements.
- ☐ Tear down sorting stations and other zero waste equipment.
- ☐ Clean up.

AFTER THE EVENT

- ☐ Encourage attendees to bring leftover food home using reusable containers.
- ☐ Compost any remaining leftover food.
- ☐ Ensure that compostable, recyclable, and landfill items are hauled to the correct end-sites.
- ☐ If applicable, return rented reusables.
- ☐ Store or donate extra supplies.
- ☐ Gain feedback from staff, volunteers, and attendees.
- ☐ Evaluate zero waste strategies and calculate your event waste diversion rate.

- ☐ Write a summary report.
- ☐ Publicize event successes.
- ☐ Thank staff, volunteers, vendors, and attendees for participating in your event.
- ☐ Plan next zero waste event!