

# Sustainable Stillwater

Sustainable Stillwater developed an online Green Business Directory in 2020. We identify potential sustainable businesses, invite them to apply to our directory and score their applications as to their sustainability. If they score high enough we award them with a certificate, make sure they're aware of grants such like BizRecycling offers. We also help them see where they might improve their sustainability efforts. We currently have over 130 businesses in the Directory, but very few restaurants. They want to do the right thing, but tell us there are many impediments to doing so.

Certainly strategies 12 and 13 would help restaurants, commercial kitchens and stores reduce their waste. Having GreenCorps members assist in the process of building networks between them and food pantries would be an invaluable resource.

Strategy 18: Grants and rebates to help transition to reusable food and beverage service would certainly help our restaurants and food providers in Washington County transition away from single use plastics and styrofoam.

Strategy 19: Offering grants for waste reduction, reuse, and repair would have a dramatic impact in Washington County. As far as I know, there are currently no collections for reusing items.

We certainly support #20: Reusables at county and city-led events. If cities and counties led the way, other business and non profit entities would likely follow.

Strategy 22: Join and/or actively participate in a reuse network, like Reuse Minnesota, to provide county and city staff with learning opportunities to broaden their reuse expertise is important. Our organization recently joined Reuse and are impressed with their members and the amazing work they do diverting goods from the trash stream and landfills.

Strategy 23: Establish a Repair Ambassador program, like the Recycler/Composters (RCAs) Ambassador programs. Again in Washington County, there are no in-person "fix-it-clinics" that I'm aware of.

Finally, as an organization working to reduce our city's carbon footprint, we wholeheartedly support Strategy 14: Launch bi-annual sustainable consumption challenges for residents. With over 900 members receiving our emails and newsletters, we are in an excellent position to challenge folks to reduce their food waste as well as encourage them to reuse and or/repair items thus keeping them out of landfills.

We did identify one strategy we can't get behind unless it is rewritten. Though strategy 21: Adopt an ordinance with a mandatory consumer charge for take-out single-use cups, containers, and utensils sounds good at face value, there are some negatives. Some compostables are difficult to get due to supply chain issues. Further, we feel this policy would negatively impact unhoused and lower income residents. We definitely could get behind adding a caveat to the policy on the order of "by request only" or "skip the stuff" for straws, utensils and napkins, to encourage people to move from single use to use their own.

Thanks for allowing us to comment on your carefully crafted draft policies.

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