



ANNUAL SUSTAINABILITY REPORT

2022



VISIT DENVER'S
SUSTAINABILITY PARTNER



**HONEYCOMB
STRATEGIES**

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VISIT DENVER commits to actions which reduce our environmental impact, focus on conserving resources, and utilizing products, technologies, and methods which continually improve in these efforts. Our sustainable initiatives focus in the areas of: Waste Reduction and Diversion; Energy Conservation; Water Quality and Consumption; Air Quality; Procurement; Community, and Human Resources.

This Annual Sustainability Report is intended to increase transparency, emphasize accountability, and measure progress across sustainability initiatives. In partnership with [Honeycomb Strategies](#), this report has been published for the benefit of all interested stakeholders who may wish to understand, contribute to, and be inspired by our actions to make the City of Denver and our organization a sustainable city to live in, visit, and do business in.

Throughout this report, you will see icons indicating the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. These highly regarded goals for sustainable cities, organizations and communities help evaluate our sustainable choices against a global rubric for improvement. Read more about the U.N. Global Goals [here](#).



The Convention & Visitors Bureau

ENVIRONMENTAL AND CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY POLICY

VISIT DENVER commits to actions that work to reduce our environmental impact, focus on conserving resources, and utilizing products, technologies, and methods which continually improve in these efforts. Our sustainable initiatives focus areas are: Waste Reduction and Diversion; Energy Conservation; Water Quality and Consumption; Air Quality; Procurement; Community, and Human Resources. Incorporated herein is the VISIT DENVER Environmental Purchasing Policy (EPP).

Waste Management: Reduce and Divert various waste created within the VISIT DENVER offices through reuse, repurposing, and recycling.

Energy Conservation: Optimize efficiencies in energy consumption within our offices. These efficiencies are a combination of equipment updates and procedural.

Water Conservation: Consider practices and equipment to reduce water consumption

Air Quality: Address impact of activities on air quality by taking direct flights, utilizing low emission vehicles and encouraging walking and carpooling when applicable.

Environmental Purchasing Policy (EPP): Develop a sustainable purchasing policy to address and consider environmental and ethical impacts and adhere to the stated goals of the Environmental Policy. This includes a focus on regional, organic, and sustainable materials, as well as vendors who consider their environmental impact and support the mission of VISIT DENVER.

Community: VISIT DENVER will act as a steward for the environment and local community. This includes creating opportunities for staff involvement, education of stakeholders, and participating in programs which contribute to the overall benefit of the city.

Human Resources Policy & Staff Training: Engage and educate employees as to their roles and responsibilities fulfilling the sustainable vision, objectives and goals of VISIT DENVER.

Corporate Social Responsibility: As part of VISIT DENVER's commitment to the community, the VISIT DENVER employee committee will partner with local community organizations to plan at least one corporate social responsibility program each year. All staff will be encouraged to attend.

1/4/23

Richard Scharf
President & CEO

1/4/23

Tiffany Eck
Green Meeting Liaison

ORGANIZATIONAL MANAGEMENT

Written policies are transparent to the entire organization and clearly outline expectations, allowing for accountability across all stakeholder groups. They also serve as a guideline and decision-making tool when evaluating operations and planning. VISIT DENVER has developed several policies, endorsed by leadership and reviewed annually, that directly address sustainability generally, and certain programs specifically. These guide office actions and programming choices throughout the year.



KEY ACHIEVEMENTS THIS YEAR

SUSTAINABILITY MISSION STATEMENT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Published Corporate Sustainability Policy in 2011. Policy is updated and re-published annually.
EMPLOYEE GREEN TEAM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Green Team has been in place since 2012 and meets on a monthly basis. 2022 Green Team members include: Tiffany Eck, Kat Von Helms, Sammy Bianchi, Lauren Huffer, and Earl Parsons.
STAFF EDUCATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annual staff sustainability presentation/ review in April. Green Week in April centers around Earth Day and the Annual Sustainability Challenge in June centers around Denver's Bike To Work Day. Both events provide staff education and engagement in sustainability. Monthly sustainability tip provided on ADP. All new-hires receive a sustainability 101 overview.
STAFF DONATION AND VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 14 staff participated in the Platte Park Clean Up with the Colorado Convention Center. 12 team members wrapped gifts for underprivileged children in October.
COMMUNICATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Signage on all waste bins. Sustainability folder in shared drive with all policies, etc.



The VISIT DENVER Green Team works to promote sustainability within our organization, as well as the community and stakeholders we serve.

Aligned with our environmental policy, we focus on programs, systems, and educational opportunities to reduce our impact on natural resources and the community.



Wands for Wildlife is a nonprofit inspiring people to help wildlife and the environment through re-purposing discarded mascara wands to help wildlife partners and caregivers in the treatment and care of wild animals.



Platte Park planting and clean-up in June 2022.

Staff participated in the Sustainability Week Challenge in June to encourage healthy behavior for themselves, the earth and neighboring communities.

TOTAL PARTICIPANTS	42
BIKED TO WORK	8
VISITED FARMER'S MARKET	50%
MADE A CHARITABLE DONATION	40%
TOTAL STEPS WALKED	1,111,443
SUSTAINABLE BREWERY TOUR PARTICIPANTS	23

CERTIFICATIONS & ACCREDITATIONS

Third-party assurance ensures that an organization is correctly and accurately operating and reporting. VISIT DENVER has been proud to maintain its ELP Certification at Gold Level for four years. In addition, In 2020, NatGeo UK recognized Denver as 4th most sustainable destination in the world. We are proud of the city of Denver leadership and focus on sustainable development and infrastructure. These programs and practices help us support sustainable meetings by building a community of resources and innovation. Lead by the City and County of Denver's Office of Climate Action, Sustainability & Resiliency, these efforts strengthen our economy and enhance our quality of life and experience in Denver.



KEY ACHIEVEMENTS THIS YEAR

ENVIRONMENTAL LEADERSHIP PROGRAM COLORADO CERTIFICATION

- Recognized as Bronze in 2017, Silver in 2018, and Gold in 2019.
- Recertified Gold 2020, 2021, and 2022.



ENVIRONMENTAL LEADERSHIP PROGRAM COLORADO (ELP)

Statewide environmental recognition and reward program which offers benefits and incentives to members that voluntarily go beyond compliance with state and federal regulations and are committed to continual environmental improvement.

COMMUNICATIONS AND MARKETING

An effective sustainability strategy creates internal and external buy-in for programs, offers opportunity for education, delivers awareness, and increases brand value. Communication is exhibited in many forms, such as engagement, signage, training and education, marketing, and through sponsorship assets, and should be strategized initially based on two broad audience categories: internal and external. VISIT DENVER maintains both internal sustainability communications such as annual trainings and intranet resources, as well as external resources through our user-friendly website.



KEY ACHIEVEMENTS THIS YEAR

WEBSITE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dedicated sustainability website is maintained regularly. • https://www.denver.org/denver-meetings-conventions/sustainability/
MARKETING MATERIALS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All marketing collateral is updated to include sustainability metrics through 2022.
ANNUAL REPORT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • VISIT DENVER Annual report includes statements on Green Achievements. • For this first year, this annual report is published to focus exclusively on the sustainability initiatives of the organization.

SUPPLIERS AND PROCUREMENT

VISIT DENVER is the leading resource for sustainable meetings in Denver. Many of our member businesses are leading the way towards a more sustainable city for our residents and visitors. To demonstrate their commitment and continually improve their practices, many have adopted and been certified to the leading standards in their industry. Our Green Vendor Directory and Hotel Survey allows visitors to sort businesses by certification type and practice. We are proud to support and promote our partners and their sustainable efforts.



KEY ACHIEVEMENTS THIS YEAR

HOTEL PARTNERS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual hotel survey completed and published online in 2022. This year's survey included 42 hotels with sustainability certifications. • https://www.denver.org/denver-meetings-conventions/sustainability/hotel-sustainability/
GREEN MEMBER DIRECTORY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In 2017, developed a Green Member Directory for VISIT Denver Partners with sustainability certifications. • 2022 annual audit completed in April. • https://www.denver.org/denver-meetings-conventions/sustainability/green-vendors/
ENVIRONMENTAL PURCHASING POLICY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developed Environmental Purchasing Policy • 96% of consumable goods purchased adhered to the EPP. • 51% of durable goods purchased adhered to the EPP.

Environmental Purchasing Policy (EPP)

VISIT DENVER defines Environmentally Preferable products as having a lesser or reduced effect on human health and the environment when compared with competing products and services that serve the same purpose.

VISIT DENVER strives to adhere to the EPP where feasible, for the following:

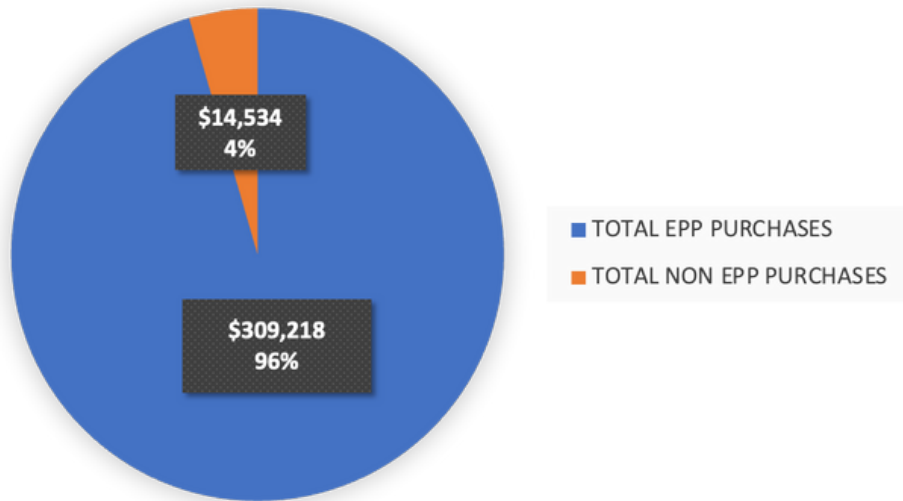
1. Ongoing consumables: 75% of total purchases (by cost)
2. Durable goods: 40% of total purchases (by cost)
3. Cleaning/Janitorial: 50% of total purchases (by cost)

For the purposes of this policy, purchases are categorized as follows:

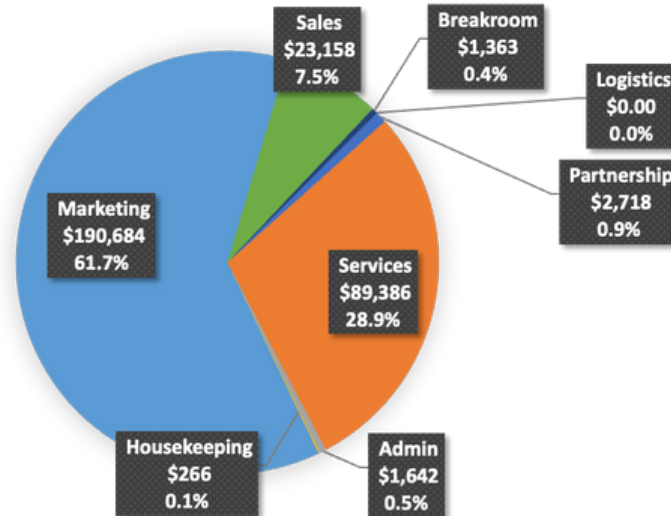
1. **Ongoing Consumables** – materials with low cost per unit that are regularly used and replaced through the course of business, such as paper (printing or copy paper, notebooks, notepads, envelopes), easel signs, toner cartridges, binders, batteries, client amenities/gifts and desk accessories.
 - Contains minimum 25% recycled content
 - Contains minimum 25% postconsumer content
 - Made in Colorado
 - Made in USA
 - Forest Stewardship Council (FSC)-certified or Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI) paper products.
 - Toner cartridges, markers, sharpies are certified as AP Non-Toxic and CL Certified (ACMI).
 - Green Seal certified or equivalent
 - Reclaimed Material
2. **Durable Goods** – items available at a higher cost per unit that are replaced infrequently and/or may require capital program outlays to purchase, such as electric-powered equipment (computers, monitors, copiers, printers, scanners, fax machines, refrigerators, dishwashers water coolers, external power adapters, televisions, audiovisual equipment) and furniture.
 - Electric-powered equipment:
 - ENERGY STAR qualified equipment
 - Furniture:
 - At least 25% postconsumer materials- recycled, biodegradable and/or compostable
 - At least 70% material salvaged from off-site or outside the organization
 - At least 70% material salvaged from on-site, through an internal organization materials and equipment reuse program
 - At least 50% rapidly renewable material (i.e. Bamboo, Cork, Natural Rubber, Soy, etc.)
 - At least 50% FSC-certified wood
3. **Cleaning Products** –
 - Green Seal or equivalent for general purpose, bathroom, glass and carpet cleaners used for industrial and institutional purposes or equivalent.
 - Disposable Janitorial Products and trash bags with recycled content for: liners, paper towels, toilet tissue, hand towels, and napkins.

Tracking: All purchases made through each department will be recorded onto the corresponding Sustainable Purchasing Tracking Spreadsheet by the Coordinator of the department on a monthly basis to be reviewed quarterly.

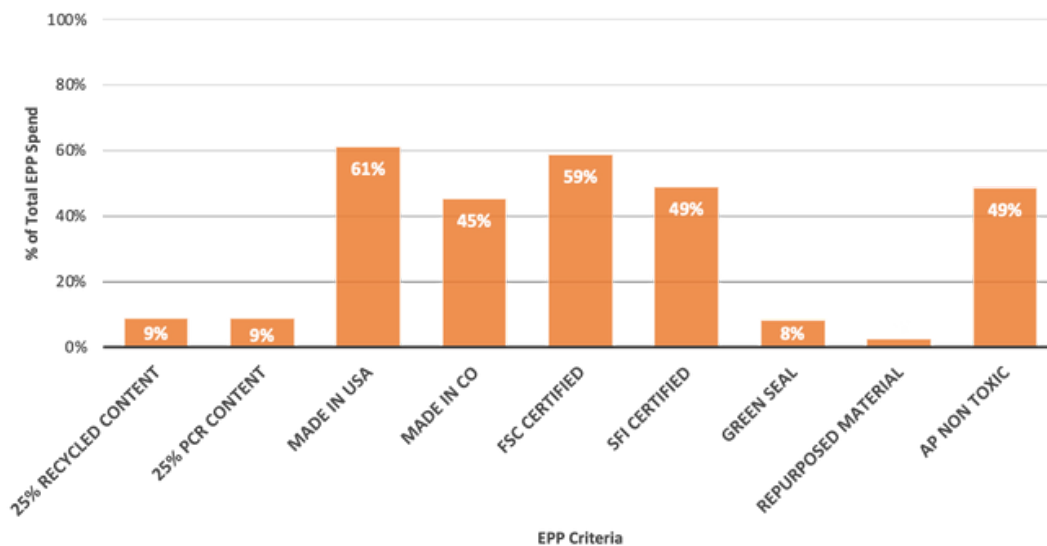
EPP vs. Non-EPP Total Purchases - Consumable Goods



EPP Purchases by Department - Consumable Goods

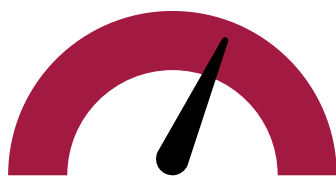


Types of EPP Purchases - Consumable Goods



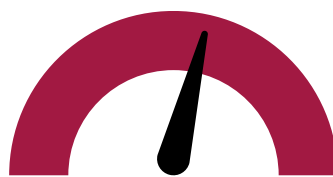


First conducted in 2012, the hotel sustainability survey is a comprehensive list of best practices in the hospitality industry. By participating, hotels provide guests to the city with comparable information regarding the sustainability practices of local hospitality options. In 2022, over 40 hotels completed the survey.



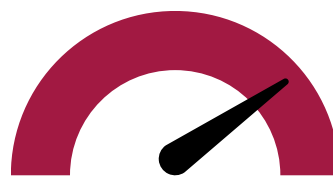
62%

Have an
Environmental or
Sustainability
Policy signed by
management.



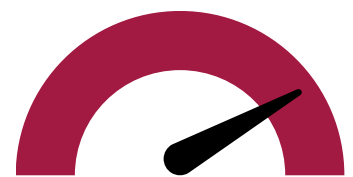
57%

Have at least one
sustainability
certification.



78%

Have installed low-
flow shower heads
(2.0 gallons or less)
in 75% of all
fixtures.



81%

Offer a linen
reuse program.

COMMUNITY

VISIT DENVER encourages behaviors that improve health and create a more pleasant experiences at work and while visiting our vibrant city. Wellness programs provide benefits like increased productivity, morale, and retention. Inclusion measures create a sense of belonging, enhance innovation, and increase efficiency and teamwork. We have developed several programs to enhance local charities and to provide opportunities for visitors to engage with our community as well.



KEY ACHIEVEMENTS THIS YEAR

VOLUNTOURISM

- VISIT DENVER publishes and maintains a Voluntourism website.
- Annual update and audit completed in April.
- <https://www.denver.org/denver-meetings-conventions/sustainability/voluntourism/>

INVOLVEMENT WITH COMMUNITY / ENVIRONMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

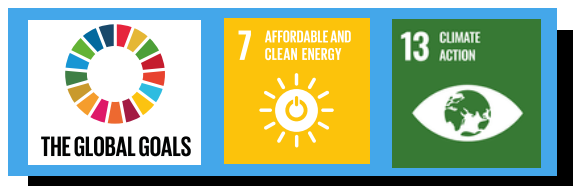
- Wands for Wildlife Program: completed and collected 25

Depiction of Wands for Wildlife in use, which repurposes old mascara brushes into tools for wildlife experts and veterinary care.



AIR QUALITY

Transportation has a significant impact on the carbon footprint of our organization's day-to-day operations. Every mile driven in a single passenger gasoline vehicle typically emits one pound of carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions. This impact is significantly reduced when people choose to take public transportation, carpool, walk/bike, or utilize an all-electric or plug-in hybrid vehicle. Integrating alternative transportation offerings not only reduces the impact of our organizational activities on the environment but also creates a better guest experience for visitors taking part in low-carbon travel through improved safety, decreased vehicular traffic, pollution, and noise. In addition to implementing a week dedicated to encouraging staff to bike to work, VISIT DENVER also encourages healthy air quality through the following initiatives.



KEY ACHIEVEMENTS THIS YEAR

ALTERNATIVE TRANSPORTATION OPTIONS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> VISIT DENVER publishes and maintains information about carbon reduced, or carbon-free travel. https://www.denver.org/about-denver/transportation/get-around-without-a-car/
STAFF TRAVEL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Established Staff Travel Policy.
AIR TRAVEL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> VISIT DENVER has tracked air travel miles since 2017. In 2022, VISIT DENVER air travel accounted for 108.97 tCO₂e.

WASTE MANAGEMENT

Waste management is one of the most visible environmental elements of operations. VISIT DENVER prioritizes waste reduction to encourage decreasing the total amount of waste generated from our activities. In addition, we have developed secondary programs for waste diversion, which encourages redirecting waste from the landfill stream to a higher and better use.



KEY ACHIEVEMENTS THIS YEAR

PAPER REDUCTION

- Reduced paper consumption through the following strategies: (1) Purchasing post-consumer recycled content paper (minimum 30 % post-consumer content), (2) Providing marketing materials online (3) setting printers to default double-sided
- Work with Iron Mountain to track recycling from document shredding.
- Paper reduction tips are provided to staff members during annual sustainability training.

FOOD AND BEVERAGE WASTE

- Established dishwashing system to encourage staff to use reusable cups instead of disposable. VISIT DENVER tracks the reduction on an annual basis.
- Installed water bottle refill station in office with tracker.

E-WASTE RECYCLING

- Implemented program for office electronics waste like computer parts.

OFFICE PAPER USE

YEAR	SHEETS OF PAPER
2015	335,000
2016	190,000
2017	240,000
2018	215,000
2019	215,000
2020*	50,000
2021*	30,000
2022	85,000

PAPER SHREDDING

YEAR	LBS OF PAPER
--	--
2016	2,421
2017	3,365
2018	3,353
2019	3,554.7
2020*	1,076.6
2021	3,860
2022	2,980

*REDUCED USE DUE TO COVID-19

PAPER CUP USAGE

YEAR	CUPS
2015	9,300
2016	6,000
2017	3,800
2018	4,000
2019	6,000
2020*	0
2021*	850
2022	1,100





VISIT DENVER has made remarkable strides towards implementing sustainability, and continues to highlight the city's unwavering commitment to creating a more environmentally responsible and resilient future.

Denver's commitment to sustainable events not only enhances the city's reputation as an eco-conscious destination but also contributes to the broader global effort to reduce environmental impact and promote responsible event planning practices. This dedication continues to attract organizers and attendees who share a passion for sustainability.

The partnerships formed between government agencies, businesses, and community organizations showcase Denver's collaborative spirit in tackling complex sustainability challenges and hosting eco-friendly events. These alliances have fostered innovation, bolstered economic growth, and reinforced Denver's reputation as a forward-thinking, sustainable city.

VISIT DENVER's unwavering dedication to progress leaves us optimistic that Denver will continue to flourish as a model of environmental stewardship and a hub for sustainable events for years to come.



Questions or Comments?

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