



Sustainability Event Toolkit



MeetGreen[®]*

Meetings That Move You



Plan Today, Preserve Tomorrow

Sustainable meetings. There's the average kind; then there's the Mountainkind—embracing a way of life that celebrates each other while protecting the natural beauty and unique charm of the place we call home.

Nestled in the Wasatch Mountains, Park City, Utah, is shaped by its stunning surroundings, unique cultural aspects, and dedication to sustainability. Destination stewardship is woven into the fabric of our alpine town. To combine our commitment to respecting resources, fostering a sense of place, and pursuing action-focused outcomes into one word, we launched the brand platform, Mountainkind—to take meaningful action, promote stewardship, and be mindful of others and wildlife.

Created in partnership between Park City Chamber of Commerce & Visitors Bureau and MeetGreen, this toolkit provides you with actionable resources for planning meetings and events that leave a positive impact on the environment, local economy, and community.



Sustainable Meetings & Events Review



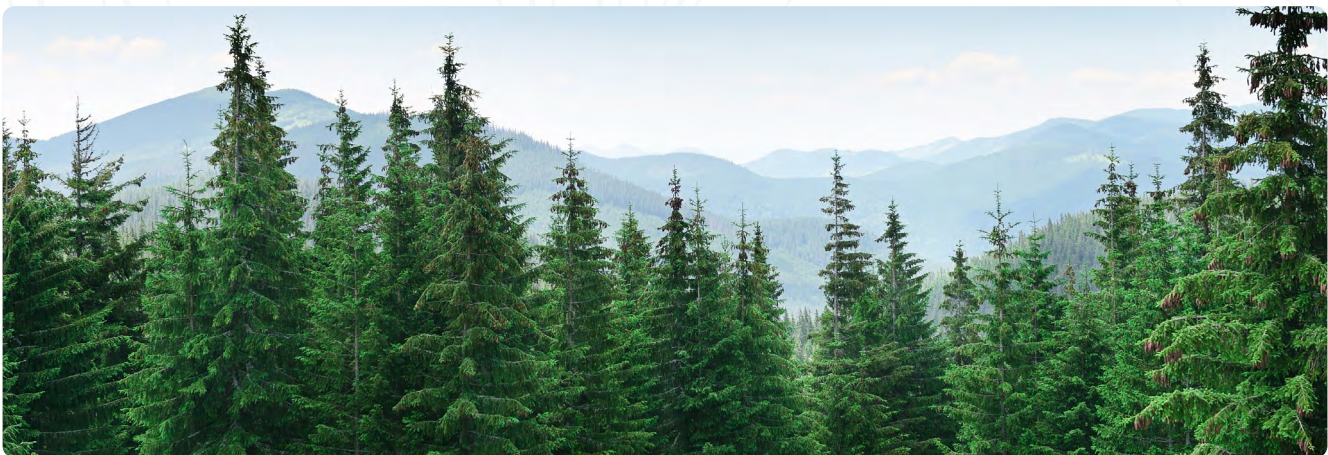
What is Event Sustainability?

Event sustainability refers to managing an event in a way that reduces its environmental footprint while considering economic and social impacts:

- ✿ **Environmental Responsibility**
Reducing waste, conserving resources, and minimizing carbon emissions.
- ✿ **Social Responsibility**
Supporting local communities and workforce, reducing impacts for residents and engaging stakeholders in sustainability efforts.
- ✿ **Economic Impact**
Ensuring sustainability practices are cost-effective and contribute to the long-term resilience of the event industry.

Sustainable event management requires collaboration between event organizers, vendors, and attendees to achieve the following:

1. Setting clear sustainability objectives (e.g., reducing waste, supporting local businesses).
2. Engaging stakeholders and consumers in sustainability efforts.
3. Tracking and reporting on sustainability metrics to measure the event's impact.





Key Planning Stages

1. Identify sustainability goals and objectives

Set specific and measurable sustainability goals for the event, such as reducing waste by a certain percentage, minimizing carbon emissions, or supporting local eco-friendly businesses. For annual events, you might consider establishing a baseline understanding of key metrics including waste generation, water, and electricity use at your event. Using this information can help inform the delivery of future events. For one-time events, setting achievable and small goals is a good place to start, don't feel like you must do it all at once!

Initial steps to help define your goals:

- ✿ **Develop**
Create a written plan to reduce environmental impacts and increase social impact. A plan may or may not include a policy or written commitment to environmental stewardship.
- ✿ **Determine**
Who will manage the sustainability initiatives of the event on a day-to-day basis?
- ✿ **Involve**
Work with key stakeholders, including sponsors, vendors, and attendees, in setting sustainability goals and gaining their commitment to support initiatives.

2. Review Existing Best Practices

Understanding the resources and programs that are already in place and identifying gaps will help determine where new efforts can be focused. For example, do you already have a robust recycling program? Are there bins already onsite that can be used for this event? Separately, if there are gaps in your ability to manage problematic materials, can they be reduced? In many events there are booths, carpet and other resources that get thrown away at the conclusion of an event. Can you find alternatives for those or not use them at all?

Identify the bright spots! What programs do you already have in place? What resources are available to you already? Make a list of the assets and initiatives you have in place.

Where are the gaps? Do you need to find alternatives to materials that generate waste? Can materials be donated? Look for creative partnerships, collaborations, and alternatives to help achieve your goals.





3. Create Communication Strategies

Communicating your sustainability plan is critical for success. Plans may be broad or directed on key initiatives. This might include encouraging the use of public transportation, eliminating single-use plastic, or promoting a volunteer or community give-back event. Make sure communications are consistent and include:

- ✿ **Internal Communication**
Ensure clear communication within the event planning team regarding sustainability goals, responsibilities, and timelines.
- ✿ **External Communication**
Communicate sustainability initiatives to vendors, sponsors, and attendees through event websites, emails, and promotional materials to raise awareness and encourage participation.
- ✿ **Provide Guidance**
Offer guidance and resources to vendors and sponsors on sustainable practices they can adopt to align with event objectives.

4. Engage Vendors

Collaborating with vendors is critical for executing a sustainable event. Whether it's selecting eco friendly materials, minimizing waste, or streamlining operations, vendors play an important role in helping achieve sustainability goals. To ensure sustainability goals are met, engage vendors as early as possible and establish clear sustainability expectations. Here are some tips:

- ✿ **Share Your Sustainability Goals**
Provide vendors with a clear outline of your sustainability objectives, such as using locally sourced food, reducing single-use plastics, or eliminating unnecessary packaging.
- ✿ **Hire Local Artists and Artisans**
Collaborate with local creatives and makers to support the local economy and add unique, community-focused elements to the event.
- ✿ **Prioritize Eco-Friendly Vendors**
Choose vendors with a record of sustainability, like using reusable service ware or minimizing waste.





❖ **Build Sustainability into Contracts**

Ensure sustainability requirements are included in contracts to create accountability.

❖ **Request Data Tracking**

Ask vendors to provide data on sustainability metrics (e.g., waste generation, recycling rates) and communicate your data needs early on to allow time for planning and compliance.

❖ **Vendor Negotiation**

When vendors are unfamiliar with sustainability practices, negotiation may be necessary. Focus on cost-neutral or low-effort sustainability measures like bulk serving items or smaller plates to reduce upstream food ordering and downstream food waste. Many sustainable practices, like offering reusable service ware, are cost-saving for vendors.

5. Event Execution

During the event, conduct a back-of-house tour to observe the implementation of planned sustainability practices. This walkthrough typically includes areas like waste docks and kitchens to verify that key actions are in place. Confirm that other agreed upon practices, such as recycling and compost collection, food scrap management, and waste separation, are fully operational.

As you assess these areas, document the event's sustainability practices with photographs where possible. Capture elements like reusable service ware, waste stations, sustainability signage, and the processes for move-in/move-out.

6. Post-Event Evaluation and Reporting

As post-event data becomes available, begin compiling your Event Sustainability Report to document successes and lessons learned. Share this report with internal and external stakeholders to showcase the impact of your sustainability efforts. Reporting on measured outcomes not only highlights your event's achievements but also inspires continued commitment to sustainability for future events.



Top 10 Sustainable Event Practices



Use these 10 practices as a starting point to make your event as sustainable as possible. Although they aren't the only sustainable event practices, they are the highest impact efforts you can take.

Sustainability Initiative	Description	Impact
Food Waste Reduction	Take waste reduction steps such as using historical data to predict food and beverage buys, reducing buffet options, etc.	Very High
Reusable Service Ware	Request that reusable service ware be used for all meals.	High
Plant-Forward Menu	Plan for a menu with many plant-based options and reduce or eliminate beef.	High
Material Rental or Reuse	Request that materials such as furniture, build materials, and decor be rented. If custom, make a plan to store for reuse.	High
Communication	Communicate event sustainability initiatives through onsite digital signage, event app, website, etc.	High
Recycling	Request venues and hotels to recycle (paper, glass, aluminum).	Medium-High
Swag	Request that physical conference swag be reduced or eliminated. Ensure quality and thoughtful swag is provided if reduced.	Medium-High
Reusable Water Containers	Replace single-use bottled water with reusable glasses/bottles and water stations.	Medium-High
Food and Material Donation	Request that leftover food and materials be donated locally.	Medium-High
Environmentally Preferable Materials	Where physical materials are needed, request that FSC-certified wood and paper products be used over metal and plastic.	Medium

By incorporating these 10 practices, you will have eliminated ~90% of the waste and non-travel carbon from your event!



Food Waste Reduction Efforts

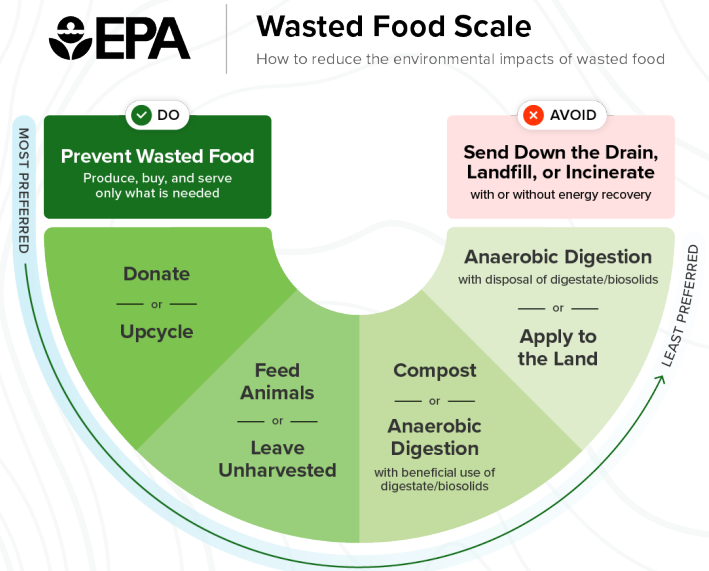


To create a very high impact as part of your sustainable event strategy, food and beverage planning is a good place to start. Waste reduction, recycling, and composting initiatives all play a crucial role in zero-waste goals and keeping the environment pristine.

- ❁ Use pre-event meal counts to minimize food waste.
- ❁ Choose local and organic options.
- ❁ Communication is key: Inform your attendees of your intent—working to reduce food waste. Include that information in know-before-you-go materials
- ❁ Serve beverages in bulk beverage dispensers.
- ❁ Not all food pantries accept donations, so another way to reduce food waste is to use leftovers to feed crews.
- ❁ If you do donate food, it is often recorded by weight, and you can use that information in the storytelling aspect of your meeting’s reduced footprint.

Local Resources:

- ❁ [Waste Less Solutions’ food rescue program](#): Picks up surplus food to deliver to food-insecure residents.
- ❁ Zero Food Waste Compact (Park City Community Foundation): Eliminating and diverting all food waste from the Summit County landfill by 2030 to reduce emissions, protect water sources, and create economic benefits.



Eco-Conscious Transportation

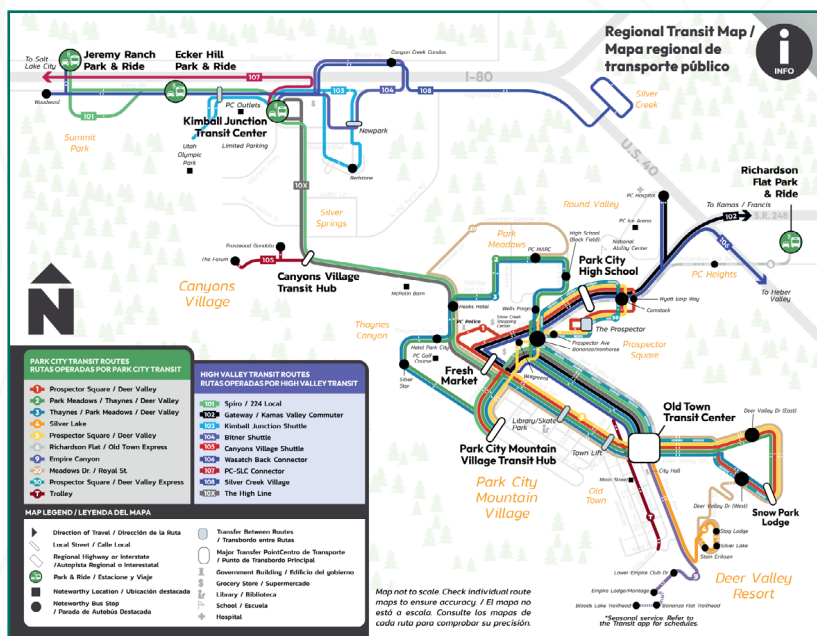


Like with food and beverage, planners should also create communication strategies focused on transportation as part of their sustainable meetings plan.

- ❁ Communicate walking routes to attendees and hotels.
- ❁ Use alternative, hybrid, or lower-emissions vehicles.
- ❁ Encourage attendees to use public transportation.
- ❁ Incentivize attendees to travel with others to minimize single-occupancy trips.
- ❁ Purchase locally sourced products to reduce transportation emissions and support local suppliers.

At a Glance: Park City Transportation

Free, convenient public transit and easy access to meeting spaces make it easy to leave a smaller environmental footprint.



Citywide bus system fueled with 30% solar electricity and 70% biodiesel



40+ miles of paved, multi-use pathways



Low-fee Summit Bike Share program (pedal-assist e-bikes) available in summer

Local Resource:

[Download Transit App & Share with Attendees](#)



Additional Sustainable Event Tools



Sustainable Event Planning

[My Event Footprint - Impact Calculator](#)

[Sustainable Event Infographics](#)

[United Nations Sustainable Development Goals](#)

[ISO 20121: Event Sustainability Management Systems](#)

Local Resources

[Park City Christian Center](#)

[Momentum Composting](#)

[Local Art & Artisans](#)

[Green Business Program](#)

Carbon Offsets

[Carbon Offset Basics](#)

[Bonneville Education Foundation - Carbon Offset Overview](#)

Emergency Response Planning

[Emergency Response Plan Template](#)

Food & Beverage Resources

[Bill Emerson Good Samaritan Food Donation Act of 1996](#)

[ReFED Roadmap to Reduce U.S. Food Waste](#)

[Monterey Bay Seafood Watch](#)

[Know Your Food: Water-Wise Infographic](#)

[Environmental Impacts of Food Production](#)





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