



SUSTAINABLE TYBEE

TYBEE ISLAND'S SUSTAINABILITY PLAN

2025-2030



**The City of Tybee Island's
Sustainability Mission:**

To protect, preserve, and improve the natural environment of Tybee Island for all to enjoy while serving as a statewide leader in sustainable stewardship.

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SUSTAINABLE TYBEE

This Sustainability Plan outlines the goals and strategies necessary to advance Tybee Island as a more sustainable community. This plan fulfills the City Council's directive to develop a plan for sustainability that addresses the health and well-being of residents and visitors while balancing environmental, social, and economic development needs of the island, in addition to preserving Tybee Island's unique character.

The core goals and strategies of this plan are to:

- Establish Tybee Island as a leader in sustainable policies and initiatives that enhance residents' quality of life and minimize tourism's environmental impact.
- Develop practical incentives to help businesses, residents, and visitors adopt environmentally sustainable practices.
- Ensure the plan's goals are both actionable and achievable while fostering community education and engagement.

The Sustainable Tybee plan is structured with goals divided into four main areas of focus:

1. Resources & Efficiency
2. Waste & Recycling
3. Outreach & Education
4. Greenspace & Wellness

The successful implementation of this plan will require input and actions from the City Council, city staff, and other community groups and organizations.

The plan includes both goals and strategies already being achieved today, as well as goals and actions that should be considered for future implementation. Essentially, this plan serves as a roadmap for integrating sustainable practices into every aspect of city operations. Through collaboration, innovation, and commitment, Tybee Island will protect natural resources, strengthen the economy, and enhance the quality of life for residents and visitors.

The City of Tybee Island is a member of the Southeast Sustainability Directors Network (SSDN). SSDN is a network of local governments working together to create clean and healthy communities throughout our region. It is comprised of members from cities and counties in Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, and Tennessee.



SUSTAINABILITY SURVEY

In 2024, a Sustainability Survey was conducted among bars and restaurants on Tybee Island to assess current environmental practices and identify opportunities for improvement. The survey focused on key areas such as waste reduction, recycling participation, reusable cup program, and sustainable sourcing.

Tybee Island Sustainability Survey for Restaurants & Bars

SUMMARY OF RESPONSES

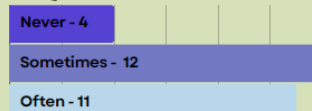
On Tybee Island we recognize that while sustainability is important, perfect sustainability is impossible.

It's recognized that most bars and restaurants on Tybee Island are currently engaged in at least one of the sustainable practices listed below. However, at the same time, we all understand that we can do even more to protect the future of our island and our businesses.

Current number of businesses engaged in the following sustainable practices:

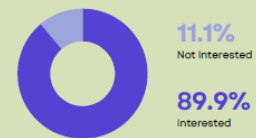
20	17
Serving in house food with reuseable cups, plates and utensils.	Packaging To-Go food in non-plastic bags, containers & cups.

Purchase from local farmers & producers:

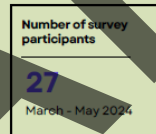


Would you be interested in an island wide reusable cup program?

Percentage of restaurants and bars surveyed wanting to participate:

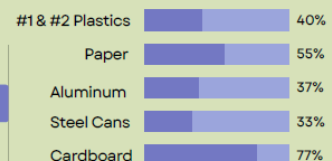


Survey administered electronically or by city staff/volunteers, in-person. Responses submitted by business owners, managers & staff.



Total number of restaurants & bars: 50

Businesses engaged in recycling materials:



TYBEE ISLAND
GEORGIA

2024

- **Recycling Participation.** Roughly 25% of Tybee businesses currently participate in recycling programs, with employee participation being a common challenge.
- **Waste Reduction Efforts.** Many establishments have adopted reusable alternatives or reduced single-use plastics, but further education, resources, and economic incentives are needed.
- **Sustainable Sourcing.** A growing number of businesses prioritize local and eco-friendly products, though cost and availability remain challenges.



VISION

The City of Tybee Island envisions a vibrant, connected, healthy, and sustainable future, with thriving local businesses, sustainable tourism, and a strong sense of community.

MISSION

Tybee Island is dedicated to preserving its natural and historic character, fostering economic opportunities, and enhancing quality of life through sustainable initiatives, education, and energy efficiency while ensuring transparent communication with the public.

SUSTAINABILITY VS RESILIENCY

Sustainability and resiliency are interrelated but also work independently. Sustainability focuses on meeting current needs without compromising future generations' ability to do the same, while resilience emphasizes a system's ability to adapt, absorb impacts, and recover from disruptions. Both are crucial for long-term well-being and factor heavily in the success of the other.

Sustainability refers to meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs by using resources responsibly and minimizing harm to the environment and society.

The United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) states that sustainability is based on a simple principle: Everything that we need for our survival and well-being depends, either directly or indirectly, on our natural environment. To pursue sustainability is to create and maintain the conditions under which humans and nature can exist in productive harmony to support present and future generations.

Resiliency is a community's the ability to adapt and recover from disruptions in a proactive and continuous manner that incorporates preparedness, prevention, protection, mitigation response, and recovery from natural disasters or human-made hazards.



PRIORITIES & STRATEGIES

Sustainable Tybee advances the community's vision for a cleaner, greener, and more enduring island. Resource efficiency is at the forefront, focusing on reducing energy and water consumption while promoting sustainable alternatives. Waste reduction and recycling initiatives aim to expand local programs, improve participation, and minimize landfill waste. Education and engagement plays a vital role, encouraging residents, businesses, and visitors to take an active part in sustainability efforts through education and volunteer opportunities. Protecting and enhancing open spaces and greenspaces remains essential for preserving Tybee's natural beauty, managing stormwater, and providing shade and habitat for wildlife. These goals reflect the collective commitment of Tybee's residents to balance environmental responsibility with the needs of a thriving coastal community.



1. Resources & Efficiency

The City prioritizes efficient use of resources to reduce environmental impact, lower operational costs, and promote long-term resilience. The plan integrates best practices in energy conservation, renewable energy adoption, and sustainable development.



2. Waste & Recycling

The City is committed to reducing waste and increasing recycling efforts by enhancing infrastructure, establishing a procurement policy, educating employees, and strengthening partnerships that conserve resources.



3. Education & Engagement

City staff and volunteers will be well-informed about sustainability measures and committed to implementing these plans while fostering strong relationships with community stakeholders to ensure that local priorities are shaped by the community.



4. Greenspace & Wellness

Greenspaces, like parks, trees, and natural areas, are strongly linked to improved physical and mental health, reduction in the urban heat island effect, improved air and water quality, increased biodiversity, and offering opportunities for exercise, stress reduction, social interaction, and enhance overall well-being.

RESOURCES & EFFICIENCY

1. Greener Buildings: Commercial and residential developments and public buildings can greatly benefit from greener building techniques, enhancing efficiency, sustainability, and resilience. The City of Tybee Island has the opportunity to establish partnerships and policies that guide development and retrofits, ensuring a greener, more resilient future for the community.

- Utilize LEED guidelines in the design and build of new city buildings to enhance energy performance, improve water efficiency, and reduce waste.
- Renovations of existing City buildings will utilize ENERGY STAR and/or LEED guidelines where feasible.
- Work with Georgia Power to provide information to residents and property owners on programs and incentives to promote building efficiency, including rebates for energy-saving retrofits and appliance upgrades, as well as free home energy improvements for eligible low-income households.
 - Home Efficiency Rebates (HER): Provides rebates for whole-home energy efficiency retrofits, with amounts ranging from \$2,000 to \$4,000 for individual households and up to \$400,000 for multifamily buildings, depending on energy savings.
 - Home Electrification and Appliance Rebates (HEAR): Offers point-of-sale rebates for low- to medium-income households for electric appliances like heat pumps, heat pump water heaters, and electric stoves, among others.
 - Energy Assistance for Savings & Efficiency (EASE): Provides free home energy improvements to income-qualified Georgia Power customers.
 - HopeWorks: Offers free energy-saving home improvements to income-qualified customers 60 years of age or older.
 - Weatherization Assistance Program (WAP): Reduces energy costs and addresses health and safety concerns for eligible households in all of Georgia's 159 counties.
 - Commercial Energy Efficiency Program: Provides rebates to offset the cost of high-efficiency equipment installation for existing buildings, new construction, and major renovation projects.

RESOURCES & EFFICIENCY

2. Energy Efficiency: The City will examine existing government facilities and implement recommendations and/or engage in energy savings performance contracting for more efficient energy usage in government buildings.

- Purchase ENERGY STAR rated equipment and appliances for use in city-owned buildings and facilities, when practical and in accordance with the city's purchasing policy.
- Light fixtures throughout City facilities have been upgraded over the years to LED lights in an effort to reduce energy consumption and increase cost savings.
- The recent renovation of City Hall saw the addition of motion sensor light switches, to automatically turn lights on when you enter a room and off when you leave. In city facilities without motion sensor light switches, implement a Lights Off / Power Down Policy by training and encouraging employees to follow it during periods when City offices are closed.
- Incorporate cool roofing products on city-owned buildings when practical.
- Encourage residents and businesses to be energy efficient.
 - Offer community education with Georgia Power that highlights other energy efficient technologies such as smart thermostats, air sealing, high-efficiency hot water heaters and high Seasonal Energy Efficiency Ratio (SEER) rated HVAC units.
 - Continue to manage the building inspection program for residential and commercial construction projects in line with Georgia's energy codes.



RESOURCES & EFFICIENCY

3. Water Efficient Building Standards: The City of Tybee Island will pursue policies that improve water conservation for all permitted projects and will pursue updates and retrofits where feasible for existing public property and city infrastructure. WaterSense is a voluntary program of the EPA designed to identify and promote water efficient products and practices.

- Conduct water audits of existing government facilities and implement recommendations or engage in performance contracting for water use in government buildings.
- Consider the use of WaterSense or higher efficiency plumbing for retrofits in existing City facilities where the long-term benefits outweigh the costs.
- Consider use of captured rainwater or reuse water to irrigate landscapes at City facilities where feasible.
- Encourage residents to use residential bathroom plumbing fixtures that meet WaterSense or higher efficiency standards for retrofitting projects.

In Georgia (and on Tybee Island), high-efficiency plumbing fixtures are required in new construction, with specific standards for toilets, showerheads, urinals, lavatory faucets, and kitchen faucets, all of which must meet WaterSense specifications.



RESOURCES & EFFICIENCY

4. Renewable Energy: The City of Tybee will support renewable energy programs and adopt its use in government operations. In addition, the City will encourage the community to transition to renewable energy.

- Invest in a demonstration renewable energy project (such as solar) on a city structure or in city facilities and use the project to educate residents, visitors, and businesses on renewable power.
- Consider purchasing/leasing a percentage of power consumed by city departments from solar power providers or other renewable energy source providers.
- Develop alternative energy standards as part of the Land Development Code using best management practices to promote and facilitate alternative energy.
- Develop a goal percent for the amount of renewable energy used for all of Tybee Island.
- Obtain a SolSmart bronze rating for the City of Tybee Island by 2028.

SolSmart is a national recognition and technical assistance program from the US Department of Energy (DOE) for local governments, to drive greater solar deployment making it possible for more homes and businesses to access affordable and renewable solar energy to meet their electricity needs.



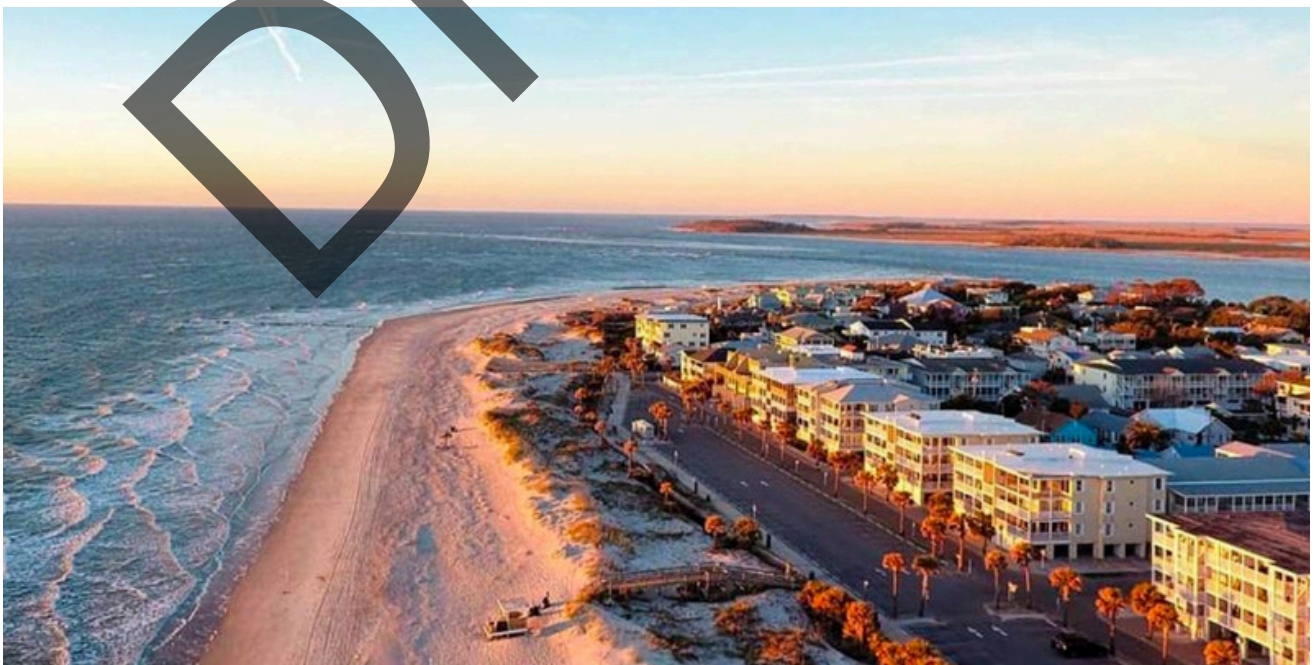
WASTE & RECYCLING

The City of Tybee Island will increase and enhance recycling infrastructure to make more recycling options available to all employees, residents, visitors, and businesses and encourage proper disposal of hard-to-recycle items.

- Continue to implement a recycling program for traditional recycling materials at city buildings, facilities, and department offices, including containers for collection of recycling and trash in office spaces, parks and appropriate rights-of-way.
- Require all city departments to adopt double-sided printing as the default setting for all printers and copiers. Whenever possible, staff should print documents double-sided and consider digital alternatives before printing. Exceptions may be made for documents requiring single-sided printing due to formatting, legal, or archival requirements.
- Require all city departments to purchase only compostable products when feasible. Eliminate the purchase of styrofoam for city purposes and city events.
- Purchase recycled paper products with at least 30 percent recycled content in accordance with the city's purchasing policy.
- Offer water refill stations in all city buildings and discourage single-use plastics and plastic bags on city property.
- Conduct a waste audit at the Department of Public Works of all recycling and drop off services to increase the City's targeted recycling rate by 10 percent.
- Continue to support curbside recycling programs for businesses for designated materials, such as aluminum, and support expanded availability of recycling services for businesses in the commercial districts through the Department of Public Works or solid waste contracts.
- Formalize recycling requirements at special events and provide collection bins to capture recyclable material.
 - The city will launch a loaner bin program for facility rentals and other special events and marathons hosted by local organizations to recycle waste.

WASTE & RECYCLING

- Prohibit the purchase of single-use plastics by the city, except when no alternative exists.
- The City will launch a foam collection system to recycle and densify styrofoam waste including retail/foodservice packaging foam, electronics and household appliance packaging foam, and clean expanded meat trays, cups, and bowls marked with the No. 6 recycling symbol. The densified foam ingots will be sold to local markets and turned into circular products.
- Investigate providing regular recycling events for electronics, hazardous waste, community shred day, and other hard-to-recycle materials with education to reduce waste. Evaluate donor fees as a potential cost reduction.
- Pursue partnerships to launch glass recycling on Tybee Island.
- Improve the signage and the functional layout at the city's recycling drop-off sites.
- Continue to provide microfilament receptacles at each of the fishing piers to safely collect discarded fishing line.



WASTE & RECYCLING

- Promote "Pack It In, Pack It Out" practices among beachgoers to reduce coastal litter, protect marine ecosystems, and encourage responsible tourism through public education, signage, and outreach initiatives.
- Promote the Hard To Recycle Center located at the Tybee Island YMCA Old School Building and acceptable materials (i.e. batteries, pet food bags, and #5 plastics).
- Coordinate with Fight Dirty Tybee and Tybee Island Main Street to expand the Certified Turtle Friendly Program, established in 2021, to businesses wanting to eliminate plastic bags, plastic straws, and Styrofoam from their operations while implementing other sustainable practices.
 - Consider a goal for 50 percent of Tybee Island businesses to be Certified Turtle Friendly by 2030.
 - Pursue and secure grant funding to provide incentives for business owners participating in the Turtle Friendly Business Program and to help offset the costs associated with sustainability programs, initiatives, and community events."



EDUCATION & ENGAGEMENT

The City will routinely offer education on waste reduction and recycling to the citizens, businesses, staff members, and the general public through events, workshops, programs, and community outreach.

- Partner with the Georgia Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and other vendors to provide a “How To” program for residential composting.
- Partner with the Georgia Coastal Management Program of DNR, the University of Georgia Marine Extension, and Georgia Sea Grant to host a rain barrels and rain gardens workshop in residential areas. The workshop will include an educational presentation and provide resources and tools to assist participants in implementing these practices at home.
- Enhance public awareness of the Tybee Island recycling program using City communications, Tybee TV, and various recycling events.
- Use artistic forms of expression to create awareness about sustainable issues and solutions. Partnering with schools and the local art community to follow the STEAM model, which includes the arts among other subjects, such as science, technology, engineering, and mathematics, will be an empowering way to engage the community on the critical topic of environmental protection.



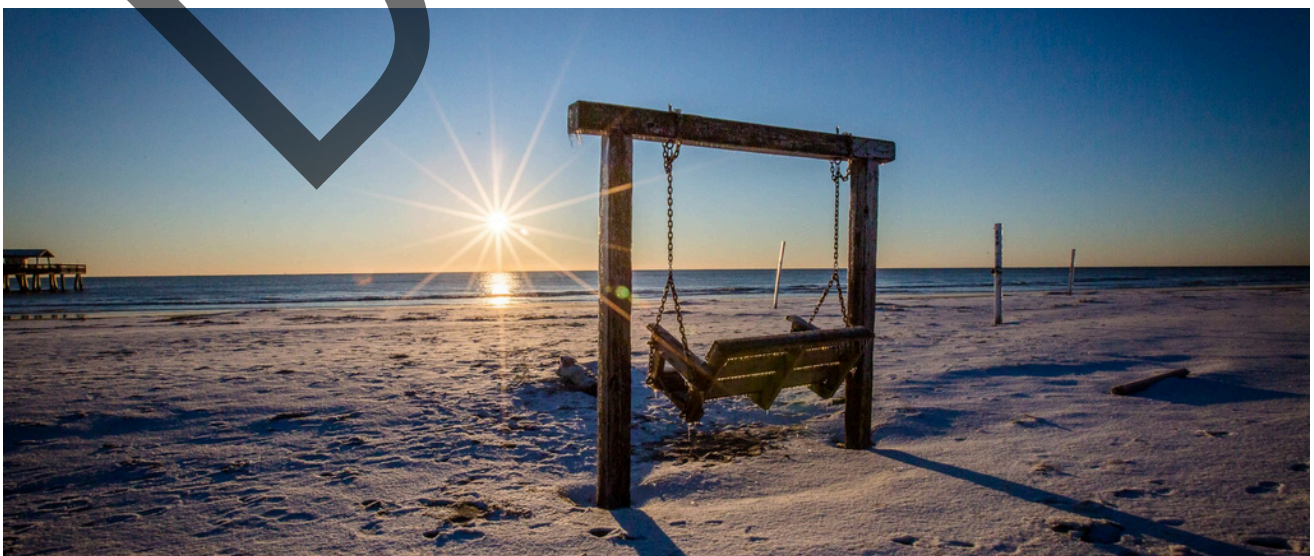
EDUCATION & ENGAGEMENT

- Work with local schools and organizations to implement recycling initiatives and associated educational efforts.
- Develop an interactive digital story map that showcases the sustainable projects, programs, and goals the City is working on by using a geographic platform on the City website. This map may include locations of electric vehicle charging station infrastructure, recycling drop-offs, beach toy borrow boxes, parks, bike trails, and community organizations that offer marine science and nature-based programs.
- Collaborate with MANOMET Conservation Sciences staff to implement training for lifeguards, code enforcement, police, and Public Works staff on shorebirds and best practices for working in or driving through important bird habitat areas in an effort to expand local and visitor knowledge about Tybee Island's shorebirds. In addition, develop an eco-tourism segment through Main Street and Tybee TV to spread awareness and recruit more volunteers for the island.

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EDUCATION & ENGAGEMENT

- Encourage residents, businesses, and local organizations to participate in the Adopt-An-Area program where adopters make a commitment to conduct monthly litter pickup from designated roadways, parking lots, beaches, marsh areas, and parks to keep Tybee tidy and create a healthier habitat for local wildlife.
- Encourage visitors to participate in regular beach cleanups with Fight Dirty Tybee and the Clean Beach Volunteers as an ongoing effort to prevent plastic pollution from entering the ocean.
- Raise awareness about the Georgia Coast Is Not an Ashtray (GCINAA) campaign as part of the Cigarette Litter Prevention Program (CLPP) created by Keep America Beautiful in 2002. Distribute GCINAA drink coasters to Tybee Island bars and restaurants for patrons and deploy ash cans along Tybrisa Street and each of the public beach crossovers to prevent cigarette litter pollution.
- Report and publish data annually about the City's commitments and actions towards its sustainability goals and programs.
- The City will institute a program to recognize a Sustainability Hero or Heroes annually.



GREENSPACE & WELLNESS

The City of Tybee Island can focus on increasing green areas, such as parks and community gardens, to improve air quality and provide recreational spaces for residents. The importance of preserving trees and retaining natural areas include the many benefits these natural systems provide, which reduce heat island effect, provide habitat for desirable wildlife, assist in dune stabilization, improve air quality, enhance storm drainage, and reduce flooding.

- The Land Development Code (LDC) requires 65 percent of the designated setback area in all zoning districts, to remain vegetated, meaning landscaped or natural plant growth including trees, shrubs, vines, ferns, mosses, and grasses.
- Tree protection is enforced through the City's plat and plan approval process, as outlined in the LDC. Anyone seeking to clear land or remove trees must obtain a Tree Removal Permit. Tree removal is permitted only if the lot or parcel maintains a minimum tree density of one tree per 1,500 square feet of upland area, either through the preservation of existing trees or the planting of approved replacements.
- Tybee Island has received the "Tree City USA" award every year since 2011 for its comprehensive tree ordinance, tree maintenance, tree plantings, commitment to improving tree canopy, and hosting the annual Arbor Day Celebration.
- The community fruit orchard at the corner of Polk Street and US Highway 80 will offer free, healthy produce, enhance local green space, and provide opportunities for engagement. Staff will look for more opportunities to replicate a similar project in likely areas of the Island.
- Tybee Island will budget for the replacement of city trees and look for partnerships and opportunities to extend the city's tree canopy. An extended tree canopy contributes to the aesthetic appeal of developed areas of Tybee by providing shade and creating a more inviting and cooler environment for outdoor activities.
- Prioritize efforts to improve Tybee's parks and greenspaces to encourage and facilitate use by all and create connectivity between green spaces. Assessing existing trails and parks for ADA accessibility will shed light on areas for improvement.

GREENSPACE & WELLNESS

- Collaborate with the Tybee Island Farmer's Markets to allow farmers and craft vendors to conduct business near the Tybee Island Lighthouse. This collaboration promotes local sourcing for goods and produce, further reducing the community's footprint.
- Tybee will continue to support and encourage the creation and enhancement of healthy pollinator habitats. The City recently established its BeeCity USA designation by:
 - Encouraging native plants and pesticide-free pollinator habitats
 - Promoting pollinator week annually with a proclamation and public pollinator garden designation and supporting
 - Partnering with GA DNR to utilize the Community Garden for various educational and events around pollinator protection and composting.
- Achieve Blue Flag certification by meeting and maintaining the highest standards of water quality, environmental management, education, and safety to promote sustainable development in our coastal areas. The Blue Flag Program for beaches, marinas and tourism boats is run by the international, non-governmental, non-profit organization, the Foundation for Environmental Education (FEE).





CURRENT PROGRAMS

Adopt-An-Area

The Adopt-An-Area program empowers individuals, families, and organizations to help keep Tybee Island beautiful and litter-free. Participants commit to monthly cleanups in designated areas, including roadways, parking lots, beaches, marshes, and parks.

Turtle Friendly Tybee

The Turtle Friendly Business Program is available to all retail shops, restaurants, bars, and businesses on Tybee Island. This initiative supports local businesses in adopting sustainable practices that help protect our coastal environment and iconic sea turtles. To earn our Certified Turtle-Friendly Business designation, a service establishment must not provide customers with any items in plastic bags, serve plastic straws, or use Styrofoam products of any kind. The City and Fight Dirty Tybee provide window decals, significant social media promotion, and incentives for participating in the program.

CURRENT PROGRAMS

Recycling

The City offers drive through recycling at the Department of Public Works, located at 76 Polk Street. Customers enter and exit through the scale gate in the main yard and inform City staff of what they are dropping off, following instructions on where to properly dispose of each recyclable material. Public Works hours are Monday through Friday from 7:30AM to 3:30PM and Saturday and Sunday from 12:00PM to 2:00PM. The drive through recycling will be closed on major holidays. Also, there are two drop off recycling locations along Polk Street and Jones Avenue in Memorial Park.

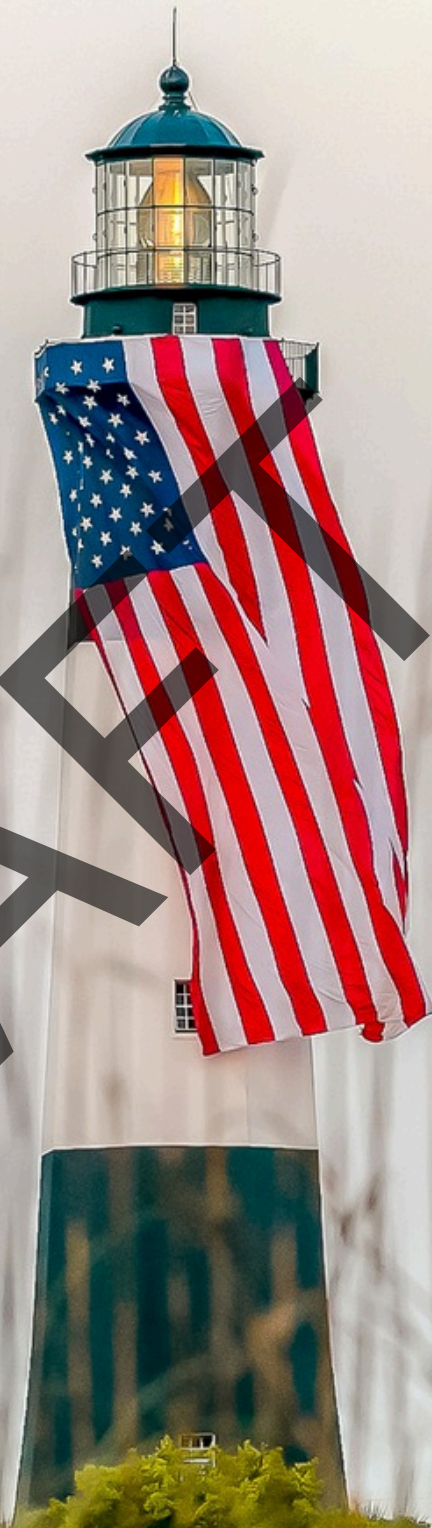
The following items are accepted at no charge: cardboard, mixed paper, #1 and #2 plastics, aluminum cans, tin and metal (i.e. washers, dryers, old metal furniture, etc.), and oyster shells. The following items will be accepted for a charge of \$0.05/pound: construction debris, landscaping brush, furniture, and other household items.

Public Works does not currently accept electronics, old paint, varnish, pesticides, or glass. However, the City periodically hosts designated events to collect some of these hard-to-recycle materials.

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The goal of the City's procurement policy is to establish clear, consistent guidelines for acquiring goods and services in a way that is transparent, fair, cost-effective, and aligned with the City's sustainability goals.

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PROCUREMENT POLICY

The City is committed to developing a sustainable procurement and purchasing policy to be used for internal city operations. This type of policy elevates and prioritizes purchasing that reduces environmental, social, and economic impacts and sends a clear message to companies and industries of the expectation the City has for the products and services it pays for.

Scope

This policy applies to all city departments, offices, and facilities when purchasing office supplies, equipment, and other materials used in daily operations in accordance with the city's purchasing policy.

Policy Guidelines

1. Reduction of Single-Use Plastics

- Eliminate the purchase of single-use plastic items such as water bottles, utensils, straws, cups, and packaging whenever feasible.
- Encourage the use of reusable, compostable, or biodegradable alternatives.
- Require vendors and suppliers to provide plastic-free or minimal packaging options.

2. Sustainable Purchasing Standards

- Prioritize office supplies and materials that are recyclable, compostable, or made from post-consumer recycled content.
- Purchase sustainably sourced paper products and minimize paper use by printing double-sided and promoting digital alternatives.
- Select non-toxic, biodegradable cleaning products and office supplies.
- Require electronic equipment to be energy-efficient (e.g., ENERGY STAR-certified).

3. Vendor & Supplier Requirements

- Require purchasing through a single, approved vendor.
- Partner with vendors committed to sustainability, ethical sourcing, and environmentally friendly production.
- Request sustainability certifications (e.g., Green Seal, Fair Trade, Certified B Corp) when procuring goods.
- Encourage local procurement to reduce transportation emissions and support the local economy (e.g., catering, lodging, and contractor services).

PROCUREMENT POLICY

4. Employee Engagement & Implementation

- Develop a sustainability training and engagement program for internal city staff with guidelines for sustainable purchasing practices. As part of staff orientation, a sustainability video will be shared for new hires to review. Ongoing sustainability and environmental education may be provided to City staff to further incorporate these values throughout the organization.
- Implement waste reduction strategies, such as centralized recycling stations in break rooms and refillable office supplies.
- Regularly review procurement practices and identify opportunities for improvement.



GOALS

The sustainability goals are intended to enhance service levels, citizen well-being, environmental protections, and economic development. These goals will be assigned to pertinent departments, measured, given a time frame, budget year, potential funding via grant or budget allocation, and one or more pilot projects to implement.

- **Reduce non-renewable consumption**

- Reduce energy consumption by 15 percent for all city-owned facilities based on the consumption rate for the 2024 baseline year, by year 2035.
- Reduce water consumption by 15 percent for all city-owned facilities based on the consumption rate for 2024, by year 2035.
- Aim to make all energy consumed on Tybee Island renewable by 2050.

- **Improve air quality**

- Increase the amount of green spaces on the city's capital projects.
- Increase the city's electric vehicle fleet, where feasible.
- Construct publicly available EV charging stations.

- **Waste diversion**

- Increase recycling efforts, composting and alternate disposal options at city buildings and on capital projects by 10 percent by year 2035.
- Increase city-wide recycling rates by 25 percent by year 2035.

- **Sustainable purchasing**

- Implement the sustainable purchasing policy with a goal of 100% sustainable office and program supplies by year 2030.

- **Tree Replacement**

- Establish a tree replacement program and budget for the one-for-one removal and replacement of city trees by year 2030.

MEASURING PROGRESS

- The City of Tybee is committed to sustainability as a Tree City USA, a Bee City USA affiliate, and a Water First Community, continually striving for certifications that enhance the island's environment and quality of life.
- The City of Tybee will measure progress toward sustainability goals and strategies by tracking key performance indicators such as recycling rates, waste diversion metrics, and completion of community events and workshops.
- Staff engagement will be monitored through participation in annual employee training and internal staff reporting. Sustainable purchasing will be tracked by reviewing procurement data to ensure purchases are in alignment with environmentally preferred policies.
- Regular reporting, analysis of recycling rates and program statistics, and annual reviews by the Sustainability Committee and Department Heads will help evaluate effectiveness, identify areas for improvement, and guide future actions.
- Encourage city staff members with sustainable duties to obtain sustainability certifications, including LEED Green Associate, LEED AP, and/or ENV SP.
- The Mayor and City Council will direct the formation of a Sustainability Committee. The Committee will perform an annual audit function to track progress and compliance with the plan and work with the Sustainability Coordinator and Community Development Director to gather data from each department within the city and prepare an annual report for City Council that documents the resulting findings. The mission of the Sustainability Committee can include:
 - To develop, maintain, and track a City-wide plan that establishes high level goals and sustainable activities to create a greener Tybee Island.
 - To provide technical assistance and develop pilot projects that identify cost savings, resource conservation, and promote a healthy environment.
 - To assist with environmental compliance efforts in regulated activities of City operations.
 - To foster a culture of community sustainability through education, outreach and engagement.
 - To develop external funding and leverage partnerships to support City sustainability goals

MEASURING PROGRESS

Key Indicator	Activity / Project	Data / Outcome
Sustainability Events & Promotions	Attendance rate, engagement level, sponsorship & funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of participants, social media interaction, volunteer sign-ups & grant awards
Recycling Metrics	Total waste collected versus recycling rate & cost savings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Measure in pounds and tons, reduction in landfill fees and revenue from recyclables & number of businesses participating
Programs & Initiatives	Education and awareness impact, policy compliance, reduction in single-use plastics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of workshops, participation & outreach initiatives

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NEXT STEPS

Building on the momentum of Sustainable Tybee, the next phase focuses on action, community collaboration and enhancing recycling collection processes. Key strategies include expanding waste reduction and recycling programs, increasing energy and water efficiency efforts, and enhancing engagement through education, incentives, and volunteer opportunities. Strengthening policies to protect trees and greenspaces will remain a priority, ensuring a balanced approach to conservation and development.

The path forward is one of partnerships and progress, working alongside residents, businesses, and local organizations to create lasting environmental change. By continuing to refine strategies, track key performance indicators, and adapt to new challenges, Tybee Island will remain a leader in coastal sustainability.



1. Create a Sustainability Committee

Engage local leaders, residents, and stakeholders with a passion for sustainability and establish the committee's purpose, key priorities, and objectives. Develop a regular meeting schedule to discuss initiatives and track progress.



2. Develop an Action Plan

Develop short- and long-term action plans for implementing the indicated sustainability initiatives and goals. Assign tasks and define expectations for committee members and city staff.



3. Find Grant Funding

Pursue funding opportunities to accelerate progress towards Tybee's sustainability goals and implement improved recycling programs, renewable energy initiatives, coastal conservation efforts, and educational outreach including the completion of the no-match grant of \$227,940 from the Georgia Department of Natural Resources - Environmental Protection Division.



4. Integrate Sustainable Procurement Policy

Review current policy and define standards for eco-friendly materials, waste reduction, and ethical sourcing. Educate employees on new procurement guidelines and their benefits and track purchases.



5. Continue to update the Land Development Code

Strengthen tree preservation and pedestrian connectivity within Tybee Island's Land Development Code to ensure stronger protections for our urban canopy and find ways to create healthy and safe bicycle and pedestrian paths island-wide.



6. Recycling & Waste Diversion

Track and analyze recyclable materials collected by Public Works and review tipping fees associated with waste disposal. By monitoring these metrics, we can assess the impact of our recycling programs and identify trends that demonstrate an increase in recycling rates and the diversion of waste from local landfills.



7. Sustainability Survey

Implement a sustainability survey every two years to engage residents and businesses, gauge participation, and analyze results to identify key trends and areas for improvement. This ongoing assessment will provide valuable data to guide policy decisions, enhance sustainability programs, and ensure that initiatives align with community priorities.



8. Annual Recognition

Honor individuals and community organizations making a significant impact through sustainability programs or self-initiated projects. Recognition will be given at City Council meetings, through news media, volunteer appreciation events, and/or press releases to highlight their contributions. Local businesses taking steps toward sustainability can also be spotlighted, encouraging more community members to promote and support eco-friendly practices.

CONCLUSION

The Sustainable Tybee Plan outlines key initiatives, including waste reduction, energy efficiency, environmental conservation, and education and engagement, all aimed at fostering a greener, more sustainable island for all. With continued dedication and collaboration, the City remains committed to achieving these sustainability goals by 2030.

01

Resources & Efficiency

Enhancing energy efficiency in public facilities and encouraging renewable energy adoption.

02

Waste Reduction & Recycling

Expanding recycling efforts, reducing single-use plastics, and promoting responsible waste management.

03

Education & Engagement

Partnering with residents, businesses, and organizations to promote sustainability initiatives and awareness.

04

Greenspace & Wellness

Protecting coastal habitats, preserving green spaces and tree canopy, and supporting sustainable landscaping.

The progress we make today defines the legacy we leave for tomorrow. Let's continue working together to protect and preserve Tybee Island for generations to come.



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Sustainable Tybee 2025 plan would not have been possible without the dedication, passion, and hard work of the City Council, staff, and individuals who commit their time and expertise to vital sustainability projects. Their efforts have helped shape a greener, more resilient future for Tybee Island, and we are deeply grateful for their contributions.

A heartfelt thank you to past and present city leadership, staff, and volunteers for their unwavering commitment including:

Brian West, Mayor

Bill Garbett, Council Member

Michael “Spec” Hosti, Council Member

Monty Parks, Council Member

Tony Ploughe, Council Member

Nick Sears, , Council Member

Kathryn Williams, Council Member

Bret Bell, City Manager

Michelle Owens, Assistant City Manager

Patricia Sinel, Community Development Director

Pete Gulbranson, Director of Infrastructure

Brent Levy, Division Director and City Arborist

Timeka Shannon, Sustainability Coordinator

Tim Arnold, Fight Dirty Tybee Founder

Tybee Island Main Street – Economic Vitality Committee

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