



## Saving Green

### Contact

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### Description

Although many business owners are interested in adopting more efficient and cost-effective sustainability practices, common barriers to implementation are lack of time, technical information, and staff capacity. In 2013, the Corvallis Sustainability Coalition contracted with Oregon State University's Applied Social Research graduate class to explore incentives, barriers, and criteria for businesses to adopt sustainable practices. Their research confirmed that technical, hands-on assistance from a sustainability professional could help businesses move forward with their sustainability goals.

The Sustainability Coalition's Saving Green program was established in Fall 2017 to offer free assistance to small and medium-sized business and organizations in Corvallis. Assistance includes:

- On-site assessments
- Research and cost/benefit analyses
- Detailed recommendations specific to the workplace in the areas of energy efficiency and conservation, renewable energy, water conservation, pollution prevention, waste prevention, recycling, hazardous waste prevention, green purchasing, and transportation
- Hands-on assistance with implementation
- Follow-up support

Our part-time Sustainability Outreach Specialist provides an extensive site visit and detailed report to participating workplaces. Those that follow through on her recommendations are able to save money as well as lower their greenhouse gas emissions. In 2018, lighting retrofits alone helped eleven local workplaces realize annual savings of over 164,000 kW hours and \$16,000 in cost avoidance on their power bills.

The Saving Green program has the potential to dramatically decrease the greenhouse gas emissions of our local business sector. However, the program needs to be expanded in order to be most effective. It is our goal to grow the program within the next year by hiring an assistant to support the research and follow-up process to workplaces that is essential to maximize the program's benefits. Studies and our Specialist's past professional experience shows that on-going support post-assessment is where the most impactful change happens, and workplaces begin to implement more and more recommendations over time.

### Timeframe

August 2017 – Sustainability Outreach Specialist hired to develop program October 2017 – Program launched October 2019 (proposed) – Program expansion

**Date Accepted:** 05/22/2019

## **Funding**

Initial funding sources were donations from Town & Country Realty and the City of Corvallis. The Sustainability Coalition maintains the program through donations to our Climate Action Fund. We have discussed requesting donations from participating workplaces and/or requiring a small fee for service, but do not yet plan to adopt such a model, as it can be a perceived barrier to participation.

## **Equity and Accessibility**

Offering the services of the Saving Green program to women and minority owned businesses and organizations is a priority.

## **Approvals**

The program was approved by the Corvallis Sustainability Coalition Steering Committee.

## **Community Action Plan (CAP) Objectives**

SS1: Sustainable City

SS3: Community Resiliency

SS6: Renewable Energy

IP2: Nurturing Small-to-Medium Sized Businesses

IP6: Balanced Economic Growth with Livability

## **Partners**

Corvallis Benton County Economic Development Office



**Which sections of the Climate Action Plan does your Initiative address?**

Buildings and Energy	Consumption and Waste
Food and Agriculture	Urban Natural Resources
Land Use and Transportation	

**Action Type:** Mitigation & Adaptation

**What direct impact will your project have on reducing greenhouse gas emissions and/or preparing community members to adapt to the impacts of climate change (drought, wildfires, flooding, etc.)?**

Corvallis workplaces will become more sustainable through implementation of the recommended actions, most of which will help reduce GHG emissions, as noted above.

**Does your project have any co-benefits (e.g. healthy local economy and local self-reliance, energy efficiency and greater energy independence from fossil fuels, sound economic investments, community livability, environmental quality and ecosystem resiliency, public health and well-being, equity and accessibility for low income/disadvantaged community members)?**

Yes, there are co-benefits, although they vary, depending on the actions taken by the individual workplaces. Co-benefits can include healthy local economy and local self-reliance, energy efficiency and greater energy independence from fossil fuels, sound economic investments, community livability, environmental quality, and ecosystem resiliency.

**What type of help, if any, do you need from the members of the Climate Action Advisory Board?**

Help spread the word about the Saving Green program, and connect us with additional funding opportunities.