

# START IN SEPTEMBER DISCUSSION GUIDE

**HELP US CREATE A GREENER, HEALTHIER, MORE  
INCLUSIVE, MORE LIVABLE DISTRICT!**

**Welcome.** This brief discussion guide will help you organize a community discussion on how DC can become a greener, healthier, more inclusive, more livable city for all. These conversations are part of a sustainability planning process initiated by Mayor Vincent C. Gray in July 2011. Your creative input will help guide decision-making as we develop a city-wide plan over the next 6-9 months. Share your ideas on the plan's major topic areas of Green Economy, Transportation, Nature, Water, Waste, Food, Built Environment, Climate and Energy. If you wish, your ideas and comments can be shared with others via the Sustainable DC website, [www.sustainable.dc.gov](http://www.sustainable.dc.gov).

Please join your neighbors, colleagues, classmates or work on your own to provide feedback by the end of September 2011. The sustainability plan process is just starting, but now is the time to think big, be creative, and envision how great our city can be.

## THIS GUIDE CONTAINS:

- 1. Five Steps for a Successful Meeting** – easy step-by-step guidance for hosting your discussion.
- 2. Meeting Agenda** – a general meeting outline for you to use or modify.
- 3. Discussion Questions** – two key questions on which we would like your input to help frame the plan. Feel free to submit the attached sheet as well as other questions and ideas that may arise.
- 4. "Did You Know?"** information on proposed sustainability topic areas: energy, climate change, water, transportation, waste, food, the built environment, nature, and green economy.
- 5. How to Provide Feedback** – instructions on how to submit your ideas electronically or on paper.

# START IN SEPTEMBER DISCUSSION GUIDE

## STEP 1- ORGANIZE

- Decide who to invite (friends, family, classmates, neighbors, colleagues) and how many.
- Decide where and when you will have your event.

## STEP 2- GET THE WORD Out!

- Invite participants to your discussion (give 1 or 2 weeks notice if possible).
- Use the attached informational flyer.
- Ask people to RSVP.

## 5 STEPS FOR A SUCCESSFUL MEETING

## STEP 5- AFTER THE MEETING

- Collect your meeting notes, pictures, or other relevant material and submit to Sustainable DC.
- Follow other Sustainable DC events at [sustainable.dc.gov](http://sustainable.dc.gov), and feel free to continue providing input!

## STEP 4- Host Your COMMUNITY DISCUSSION

- Distribute and review materials.
- Have everyone introduce themselves.
- Listen and record responses to the discussion questions. Allow enough time to hear from every participant and to summarize the responses.

## STEP 3- PREP MATERIALS

- Provide the meeting agenda and discussion questions for attendees.
- Provide pens and paper to record notes, and a camera or video camera if you want to capture photos and video clips.

## MEETING AGENDA

- 1. Welcome and introduction of attendees** – make sure everyone is introduced; as the host, feel free to explain why you wanted to host the discussion.
- 2. Useful ground rules** – it's helpful to suggest that only one person speak at a time, everyone have time to provide input, and that everyone respect the opinions of other participants, even if they disagree.
- 3. Designate recorder(s)** –if possible, capture notes and ideas on an easel or board where others can see.
- 4. Discussion questions** –make time to discuss both key questions and then go on to others. Listen carefully and ask questions if you do not understand what someone is saying.
- 5. Summarize Responses** – review and summarize the ideas to make sure all key points are captured.

## SEND IN YOUR FEEDBACK

- 1. Website** – Follow instructions to use web form at [www.sustainable.dc.gov](http://www.sustainable.dc.gov).
- 2. Email** - [sustainable.future@dc.gov](mailto:sustainable.future@dc.gov)
- 3. Mail or Fax**– If you do not have access to the website, please mail or drop off responses marked Sustainable DC: Attn: Laine Cidlowksi, Urban Sustainability Planner (DC Office of Planning, 1100 4th St. NW, Suite E650, Washington DC 20025. FAX: 202.442.7638

# START IN SEPTEMBER DID YOU KNOW?

*DID YOU KNOW... DC RANKED #8 AMONG THE 25 GREENEST CITIES IN THE U.S. AND CANADA.*

*DID YOU KNOW... MAYOR GRAY WANTS DC TO BECOME THE MOST SUSTAINABLE CITY IN THE COUNTRY!*

**SUSTAINABLE FACTS:**

**GREEN ECONOMY**

- DC is ranked #4 of the 100 largest metro areas for the number of green economy jobs.
- 2.3% of jobs in the DC region are green jobs (27th of 100 largest metro areas).
- DC added 20,403 green jobs between 2003 and 2010 (5% growth annually).

**WATER**

- The Anacostia watershed covers nearly 180 square miles, mostly in Maryland. Much of its pollution is caused by contaminants in stormwater.
- DC's combined sewer system sends untreated water into our rivers many times each year.
- DC's bag law has raised millions for stream restoration, and has the potential for much more. In 2010, stores reported a >50% decrease in disposable bag use and bags found as litter in the Anacostia decreased by 66%.

**FOOD**

- DC has 20 farmers markets, 5 are open year round.
- DC has 23 full-scale grocery stores.
- DC currently has 37 community gardens; more than 1,800 community garden plots and approximately 26.5 acres are cultivated.

**WASTE**

- DC's recycling rate was 34% in 2009; the residential recycling rate for our homes was 24% for the same year. The national average recycling rate is 33.8%.

**SUSTAINABLE FACTS:**

**TRANSPORTATION**

- DC has the nation's largest bikeshare program with over 15,000 members.
- DC's population of 600,000 increases by an additional 400,000 people each work day due to commuting.
- DC ranks #2 in the country for the number of commuters who take transit.

**BUILT ENVIRONMENT**

- DC has 170 certified "green" buildings and 623 registered buildings, second only to New York.
- DC is #2 in the nation for green, vegetated roofs with over one million square feet.

**NATURE**

- DC is home to over 780 species of birds, mammals, reptiles, amphibians, fish, and invertebrates. Our rivers are home to 67 species of fish.
- DC's current goal is to increase tree canopy coverage from 35% to 40% by 2025 (Greenbelt, MD has 62%; Boston 29%).
- 19.4% of DC's land area is green space.

**ENERGY/CLIMATE**

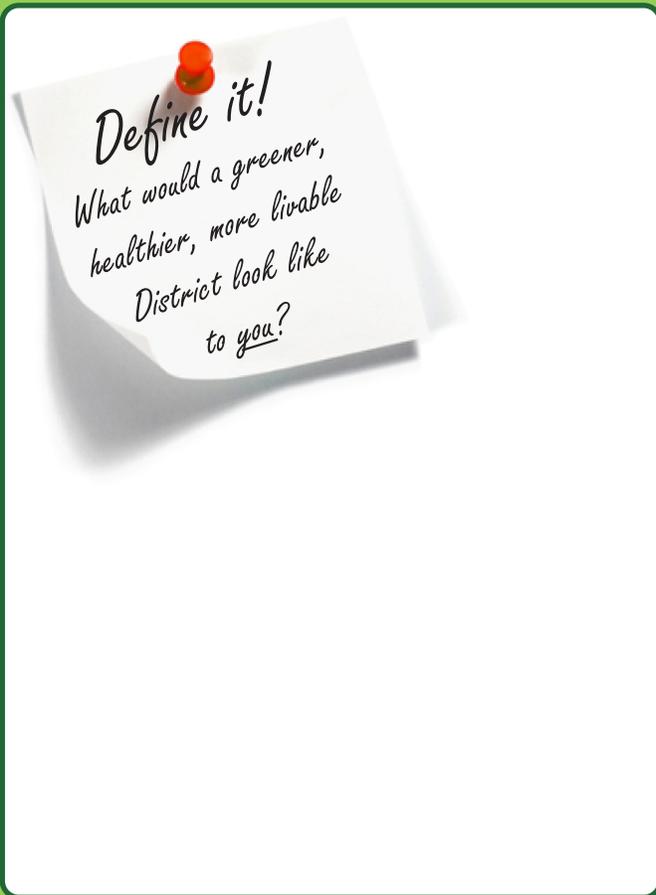
- Our city buys over 8% of its electricity from wind power; the DC Government buys 50% "green power," making us the #1 Green Power city in the nation.
- 75% of DC's energy is used in buildings.
- DC's per person greenhouse gas emissions is 18 tons/year (national average is 19.6 tons/person).

# START IN SEPTEMBER DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

## SHARE!

SHARE YOUR IDEAS ON THE PLAN'S MAJOR TOPIC AREAS: **GREEN ECONOMY, TRANSPORT, NATURE, WATER, WASTE, FOOD, BUILT ENVIRONMENT, CLIMATE AND ENERGY.**

SHARE FEEDBACK: [WWW.SUSTAINABLE.DC.GOV](http://WWW.SUSTAINABLE.DC.GOV) OR TO [SUSTAINABLE.FUTURE@DC.GOV](mailto:SUSTAINABLE.FUTURE@DC.GOV) OR SUSTAINABLE DC:  
ATTN: LAINE CIDLOWSKI, (DC OFFICE OF PLANNING, 1100 4TH ST. NW, SUITE E650, WASHINGTON DC 20025.



### DISCUSSION STARTERS

- When you think of a greener, healthier, more livable place, what words and actions come to mind?
- How can we improve in the following areas: climate, energy, water, transportation, waste, food, the built environment, nature, and green economy?
- How can we ensure all areas of the city benefit from your vision?

### DISCUSSION STARTERS

- What are you already doing to improve your environment and community?
- What programs or actions would have the biggest impact on our future?
- What actions are people most likely to take?