

# Green Business Opportunities in Montgomery County

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# Macro Context

- Moving toward sustainability is not just an environmental imperative but a strategic imperative (for businesses and government alike).
- MoCo residents are demanding that we move toward sustainability.
- MoCo Govt recognizes that a green economy enhances our environment, reduces adverse externalities and costs, and helps our businesses to be more competitive.
- Walmart and IBM – working with their suppliers to meet certain sustainability criteria.
- Federal Government - Executive Order 13514; price on carbon.

# Walmart

Walmart: working with their 60,000 suppliers

- Step 1 Sustainability Index – 15 questions gauging supplier commitment and progress.
- Step 2 Lifecycle Analysis Database
- Step 3 Product Information Labeling

# IBM

IBM – their 28,000 first-tier suppliers are now required to:

- Define, deploy, and sustain a management system that addresses corporate responsibility, including supplier conduct and environmental protection;
- Measure performance and establish voluntary, quantifiable environmental goals;
- Publicly disclose results associated with these voluntary environmental goals and other environmental aspects of their management systems.

# How is Montgomery County Responding?

- Green Business Certification Program
- Green Economy Task Force
- Guidance to departments and agencies on environmentally preferable purchasing
- Identification of actions and behaviors to green our operations and save money (e.g., paper reduction)
- Use of EECBG funds to assist businesses and organizations make energy efficient retrofits.

# Green Business Certification Program



Program is modeled after the successful Bay Area Green Business Program in California and also draws on programs in Santa Monica, Sacramento and Sarasota.

Distinct from LEED certification which focuses on buildings and major systems; the County's program is based on day to day operations and policies.

# Green Business Certification Program



Partnership with the County Chamber of Commerce and Montgomery College.

Initial focus is office/retail; tenant and owner-occupier applications

Voluntary

Onsite verification by third party consultant

Extensive resource guide

# Green Business Certification Program



Application has 260 actions in seven different categories:

- Organizational Commitment
- Waste Reduction & Recycling
- Environmentally Responsible Purchasing
- Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy
- Efficient Runoff Management and Water Use
- Pollution Prevention
- Transportation and Travel

# Green Business Certification Program



## **Most actions are cost neutral and many save money:**

- Reduce non-essential electronic equipment and appliances such as fax machines, printers, mini refrigerators, etc.
- Set copier/printer defaults to double-sided printing; eliminate or redesign forms to use less paper, or switch forms to electronic format.
- Purchase EPEAT registered computers.
- Recycle electronic equipment
- Offer brown bag sustainability lunches
- Avoid the use of bottled water for office functions (and use tap water and pitchers instead).

# Green Business Certification Program



## **Policy requirements:**

Ex: Develop and display an environmental policy that could include a mission statement, corporate values, and strategic goals that demonstrate a commitment to a green workplace.

## **Performance Measurement Requirements:**

Ex: Quantify the financial and environmental benefits associated with a paper reduction program.

# Green Business Certification Program



“Other” option for innovative actions not listed in the checklist.

All actions are weighted equally; higher bar for large companies and owner-occupiers

Tenants get credit for convincing their landlord/property manager to implement actions beyond their control.

To get certified, businesses must implement between 70 and 120 actions depending upon their size and type.

# Green Business Certification Program



## BENEFITS

- Enhanced reputation and exposure
- Competitive advantage
- Save money
- Customer and employee demand
- Align your operations with your values
- Trust certification would be favorable to Federal agencies trying to meet their “95% sustainable acquisition” targets.

# Green Business Certification Program



## Direct Savings:

Montgomery County Chamber of Commerce saved \$50,000 by reducing size of event program books.

Marriott estimates it will save about \$100,000 at its headquarters by shifting from evening to daylight cleaning, allowing them to keep their lights off for a far longer period.

Reznick Group estimates that it will save about \$26,500 a year by purchasing remanufactured toner cartridges, instead of new ones. This will prevent nearly 2,100 lbs of waste.

Shulman Rogers “virtualized” its 19 network servers onto four physical boxes, resulting in an ongoing 75% annual reduction in server hardware and operating system costs, reducing server room energy consumption by \$12,576.08.

# Green Economy Task Force Recs

1. Prefer contractually certified green businesses.
  - Currently, we do not have a system in place for preferring contractually certified green businesses. An internal “green team” (Procurement, DGS, DED, DEP DPS) is looking at this recommendation and how it might fit in with the existing programs:
    - Small Business Reserve program
    - Minority, Female, Disabled program
  - One consideration - encourage or mandate that “quality ranking factors” include environmental criteria.

# Green Procurement

Examine ways to evaluate new, locally produced green technologies and products – Green Procurement Fair this spring.

Inter-agency committee creating policy guidelines related to EPP (e.g., green specs for RFPs, third party certification, etc.)

Currently Montgomery County requires:

- Integrated Pest Management
- Minimum 30% Recycled content paper
- Green Seal cleaning products
- EPEAT registered computers

Potential to expand (e.g., remanufactured toner cartridges, no VOC paint, furniture, etc.)