



SUSTAINABLE PITTSBURGH



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Sustainable Pittsburgh partners with four Pittsburgh Business Districts to cultivate Sustainable Pittsburgh Restaurants

(Pittsburgh, PA – September 21, 2015) Today Sustainable Pittsburgh announced a new two-year partnership among four business districts within the City of Pittsburgh to support the introduction of the Sustainable Pittsburgh Restaurant program to restaurants and consumers: Lawrenceville Corporation, Oakland Business Improvement District, Pittsburgh Downtown Partnership, and Uptown Partners of Pittsburgh.

Administered by Sustainable Pittsburgh, the Sustainable Pittsburgh Restaurant program is a new sustainability performance program providing recognition for leading restaurants in southwestern PA. Building on the emerging national and global trend of restaurants embracing sustainability, the program helps establishments save money, attract more guests, stand out as a leader, gain positive public recognition, and be part of a vibrant community of restaurants serving up sustainability in the Pittsburgh region.

The business district organizations and their communities were selected to be the focus of the program through a Request for Proposals process. Concentrating on restaurants operating within these communities gives the Sustainable Pittsburgh Restaurant program a solid foundation from which to build and demonstrate its merits.

“The Sustainable Pittsburgh Restaurant program comes at just the right time when the Pittsburgh restaurant industry is really making a name for itself. By committing the recipe for success to simultaneously tend to the environment, social equity, and business interests, this movement will further distinguish itself and thrive,” said William Peduto, Mayor, City of Pittsburgh. “The launch of the Sustainable Pittsburgh Restaurant program is yet another step toward the city embracing sustainability, helping us to attract and retain talent and ensuring a more prosperous people, planet, place, and performance.”

“Lawrenceville has the fastest-growing restaurant scene in the city, and is home to a host of talented chefs and restaurateurs who are ushering in a new era of eating in Pittsburgh,” said Lawrenceville Corporation Executive Director, Matthew Galluzzo. “The Lawrenceville Corporation is thrilled to have been selected to help launch the Sustainable Pittsburgh Restaurant program, which will highlight sustainable practices already happening in our restaurants, and provide assistance to restaurants seeking to implement these practices.”

Obtaining Sustainable Pittsburgh Restaurant designation involves a restaurant’s completion of an online, self-assessment that evaluates its current state of operations. Topics covered include water, waste, energy, food sourcing, people, community engagement, and nutrition. Restaurants are recognized by the following “plates” to indicate level of achieved designation: Starter, Bronze, Silver, Gold, and Platinum.

“Oakland is home to the region's largest concentration of students and young professionals, understood as the most socially and environmentally aware consumers in the market place,” said Georgia Petropoulos, Executive Director of the Oakland Business Improvement District. “To stay on top of this growing trend and to best respond to this captured audience, Oakland's plethora of restaurants will benefit tremendously from participation in the Sustainable Pittsburgh Restaurant program.”

The Sustainable Pittsburgh Restaurant website features a restaurant finder for diners who wish to patronize establishments that demonstrate sustainability performance. Diners will be able to locate designated restaurants by map, level of designation, alphabetical order, and by county/neighborhood. Profiles of Sustainable Pittsburgh Restaurants can also be accessed through the website, providing diners the ability to view a designated establishment's commitment to sustainability practices. In turn, restaurants are provided a new venue to showcase their positive actions. All restaurants operating in southwestern Pennsylvania are eligible to participate and earn designation.

“As Downtown Pittsburgh has transformed into one of the most desirable dining locations in the city, it makes perfect sense for us to participate in this flagship program,” said Jeremy Waldrup, President and CEO of the Pittsburgh Downtown Partnership. “We look forward to engaging local restaurateurs in sustainable practices which we know will be greatly beneficial to their businesses while supporting the health of our environment.”

The partnering business district organizations will help introduce the Sustainable Pittsburgh Restaurant program to their respective communities through various outreach efforts. Some ideas generated among the districts to boost the program are: coordinating a “dinner night out” aimed to encourage customers to dine at Sustainable Pittsburgh Restaurants, providing a directory of services/products within the community or locally that can help restaurants achieve or gain a higher designation, or helping to coordinate cooperative purchasing between the community’s restaurants to help reduce costs and food waste.

“We are very eager to begin work with the partnering business districts and their restaurants to build more sustainable communities,” said Sustainable Pittsburgh Restaurant Program Manager, Rebecca Bykoski. “These districts are very excited to have earned the opportunity to be such an integral part of the program, leading our region to a more sustainable future.”

According to the National Restaurant Association, locally sourced produce and meats, environmental sustainability, and food waste reduction are among the “Top 10 Food Trends” of 2015 and gaining further momentum.

The Sustainable Pittsburgh Restaurant program helps restaurants embrace these trends and build their businesses by incorporating sustainable principles into their existing processes.

“Uptown Partners is excited to be a part of launching the Sustainable Pittsburgh Restaurant program,” said Joseph Wingenfeld, Program Manager at Uptown Partners of Pittsburgh. “This program is a perfect match for the Uptown neighborhood, which will kick-off the City’s first EcoInnovation District this fall where Uptown will become the City’s testing ground for many new and innovative sustainable practices and solutions.”

More information about Sustainable Pittsburgh Restaurants, including the designation assessment criteria, is available at sustainablepghrestaurants.org. Interested restaurants should contact Rebecca Bykoski at dine@sustainablepittsburgh.org. Sustainable Pittsburgh Restaurant is on Twitter (@dine_sustainpgh), on Facebook (Sustainable Pittsburgh Restaurant), and on Instagram (@Sustainable_Pgh_Restaurant).

*A 501(c)(3) nonprofit, **Sustainable Pittsburgh** (SP) affects decision-making for the Pittsburgh region to integrate economic prosperity, social equity, and environmental quality bringing sustainable solutions for communities and businesses.*

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