

Resolution on Housing First

This resolution declares housing stability as a human right and calls for a sustainably designed citywide comprehensive housing first program to end housing instability.

Whereas the City of Bloomington Commission on Sustainability (BCOS) promotes economic development, environmental health, and social equity in our community for present and future generations;

Noting the unsustainable nature of the negative socio-economic externality wherein the main beneficiaries of Bloomington's rising costs of housing are the biggest owners of real estate, while unhoused, non-property owning residents pay the largest costs with their dignity, health and safety;

Alarmed by reports of exclusion of city residents from available housing services due to behaviors associated with disabilities, as well as the high likelihood of unhoused people to have one or more disabilities [1], while re-affirming our municipal code on non-discrimination in the provision of housing services due to disability status; [2]

Emphasizing that "housing first" approaches that include a permanent, supportive housing program that provides housing stability to all unhoused citizens may save cities as much as \$23,000 per successful program participant through the cost savings from emergency services, like police, EMS and medical services; [3]

Welcoming the City of Bloomington's efforts to minimize the size of the unhoused population by increasing the supply of affordable housing, while acknowledging that these efforts should not be expected to meet the housing needs of every resident of our city;

Affirming the human solidarity and goodwill shown by local private, nonprofit and religious organizations to help house residents through existing housing programs, while recognizing that in spite of decades of these efforts, our city continues to have residents who lack housing stability, including many who are reportedly disabled;

Declaring that the mental trauma, physical challenges, and continual health and safety risks experienced by residents who lack stable housing is at odds with the social equity, environmental health and economic development of our entire community; [4] and

Believing that a comprehensive "housing first" policy approach has proven to be an economically sensible, environmentally sustainable and socially equitable policy solution to ending housing instability in other US cities; [5]

now, therefore, be it

Resolved, that the Commission on Sustainability:

1. Urges the Bloomington Common Council, working in collaboration with the Mayor of Bloomington, to adopt housing stability as a right in its municipal code;

2. Urges the Bloomington Common Council, working in collaboration with the Mayor of Bloomington, to conduct a feasibility study and subsequently develop a housing first plan by December 25, 2021 to ensure housing stability to all residents;
3. Further urges the Bloomington Common Council, working in collaboration with the Mayor of Bloomington, to work with all stakeholders to identify and address existing gaps and barriers to achieving housing stability for all residents; and
4. Lastly, to support the long-term success of the housing first program, urges the Bloomington Common Council, working in collaboration with the Mayor of Bloomington, to identify and consider all public and private sources of funds, especially beneficiaries of the steeply rising housing costs in our city.

Submitted by: Nejlá Routsong, Member, Commission on Sustainability

Endorsed by:

Citations

- [1] All of the unhoused Bloomington residents interviewed and mentioned by Jeremy Hogan in his ongoing series linked in the three articles below explicitly describe the unhoused person as disabled in one or more ways. Furthermore, recent reports suggest that a very high percentage of the unhoused have a disability.

Hogan, Jeremy. "Thirty-nine community members who died while experiencing homelessness remembered during vigil" September 23, 2020, The Bloomingtonian, <https://bloomingtonian.com/2020/09/23/thirty-nine-community-members-who-died-while-experiencing-homelessness-remembered-during-vigil/>;

Hogan, Jeremy. "Man dies Christmas Eve at Seminary Park; cause of death under investigation" December 24, 2020, The Bloomingtonian, <https://bloomingtonian.com/2020/12/24/man-dies-christmas-eve-at-seminary-park-cause-of-death-under-investigation/>;

Hogan, Jeremy. "Mary Jane Hoene moves back to Seminary Park saying she has nowhere else to go; City to clear tents next Monday" January 4, 2021, The Bloomingtonian, <https://bloomingtonian.com/2021/01/04/mary-jane-hoene-moves-back-to-seminary-park-saying-she-has-nowhere-else-to-go-city-to-clear-tents-next-monday/>

More than half of all unhoused people living in Toronto, Canada were found to have a traumatic brain injury, which is both a neurodivergent condition and a disability. Hwang SW, Colantonio A, Chiu S, et al. "The effect of traumatic brain injury on the health of homeless people." *CMAJ*. 2008;179(8):779-784. doi:10.1503/cmaj.080341 <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2553875/>

Unhoused Americans were found to be 12 times as likely to have symptoms of autism compared to the general population. Autism is both a neurodivergent condition and a disability. 13-JUN-2018, "First significant study on autism and homelessness" Autism. Sage. https://www.eurekalert.org/pub_releases/2018-06/s-fss061318.php

Americans with disabilities are more than twice as likely to be unhoused compared with the non-disabled. Diament, Michelle. "More Than Two-Fifths Of Homeless Have Disabilities" Disability Scoop. by July 16, 2009<<https://www.disabilityscoop.com/2009/07/16/homeless-report/4153/>>

- [2] Bloomington Municipal Code 2.21.020 - Public policy and purpose.

“It is the policy of the city that it does not discriminate in the provision or implementation of its programs and services on the basis of race, religion, color, sex, national origin, ancestry, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, housing status or status as a veteran. It is the public policy of the city to provide all citizens equal opportunity for education, employment, access to public accommodations and acquisition through purchase or rental of real property, including, but not limited to: housing, and to eliminate segregation or separation based on race, religion, color, sex, national origin, ancestry, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, housing status or status as a veteran, since such segregation is an impediment to equal opportunity. Equal education and employment opportunities and equal access to and use of public accommodations and equal opportunity for acquisition of real property are hereby declared to be civil rights.”

https://library.municode.com/in/bloomington/codes/code_of_ordinances?nodeId=TIT2ADPE_CH2.21DELA_2.21.020PUPOPU

- [3] “PSH [Permanent, Supportive Housing] has been shown to be an effective intervention for people who have multiple barriers to finding and maintaining stable housing. As the concept of PSH has evolved, increasing emphasis has been placed on ensuring that it targets the highest need people, maintains low barriers to entry, and provides the same tenancy rights that any rental housing tenants would have (that is, eviction would be based on violation of the lease, and not on compliance with any program or service requirement). In some states, PSH for homeless people has played an important role in addressing the Supreme Court’s decision in the Olmstead case, which requires that people with certain disabilities be able to access the services they need while living in the community (as opposed to in an institution).” From the Center for Evidence-Based Solutions to Homelessness, Permanent Supportive Housing, Meet the Experts: Gretchen Locke,
<<http://www.evidenceonhomelessness.com/topic/permanent-supportive-housing/>>

Aubry, Tim, Geoffrey Nelson, and Sam Tsemberis. Housing First for People with Severe Mental Illness Who are Homeless: A Review of the Research and Findings from the At Home-Chez Soi Demonstration Project. *Can J Psychiatry* 2015; 60: 467-474.

Culhane, Dennis P., Stephen Metraux, and Trevor R. Hadley. The Impact of Supportive Housing for Homeless People with Severe Mental Illness on the Utilization of the Public Health, Corrections, and Emergency Shelter Systems: The New York-New York Initiative. *Housing Policy Debate*, 2002; 13(1), 107-163; Larimer, Mary E., et al. Health Care and Public Service Use and Costs Before and After Provision of Housing for Chronically Homeless Persons with Severe Alcohol Problems. *Journal of the American Medical Association*. 2009; 301(13): 1349-1357.

“There is a large and growing evidence base demonstrating that Housing First is an effective solution to homelessness. Consumers in a Housing First model access housing faster and are more likely to remain stably housed. This is true for both PSH and rapid re-housing programs.

PSH has a long-term housing retention rate of up to 98 percent.vi Studies have shown that rapid re-housing helps people exit homelessness quickly—in one study, an average of two months—and remain housed. A variety of studies have shown that between 75 percent and 91 percent of households remain housed a year after being rapidly re-housed....Finally, permanent supportive housing has been found to be cost efficient. Providing access to housing generally results in cost savings for communities because housed people are less likely to use emergency services, including hospitals, jails, and emergency shelter, than those who are homeless. One study found an average cost savings on emergency services of \$31,545 per person housed in a Housing First program over the course of two years. Another study showed that a Housing First program could cost up to \$23,000 less per consumer per year than a shelter program.” From the National Alliance to End Homelessness, Housing First, published April 20, 2016, accessed 1/7/2021.

<<https://endhomelessness.org/resource/housing-first/>> FACT SHEET ON HOUSING FIRST ATTACHED.

- [4] The UN Declaration on Human Rights includes housing, as does the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. From the UN Declaration: “Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family, including food, clothing, housing and medical care and necessary social services, and the right to security in the event of unemployment, sickness, disability, widowhood, old age or other lack of livelihood in circumstances beyond his control.”

Housing as an American right was proposed by United States President Franklin D. Roosevelt during his State of the Union Address delivered on Tuesday, January 11, 1944.

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Second_Bill_of_Rights>

The Monroe County Commission also recently passed a resolution declaring Housing as a Human Right. ATTACHED.

- [5] “Portland, OR - the number of chronically homeless people sleeping outside declined by 70%
Los Angeles, CA - For each chronically homeless person placed in Housing First, L.A. saved \$80,000+ over 2 years
Denver, CO - 36% reduction in chronic homelessness 2005 to 2007
Quincy, MA - 50% reduction in chronic homelessness
New York City, NY - FUSE Program 91% housed after 1 year, 53% reduction in days in jail, 92% reduction in shelter day use
Portland, ME - chronic homelessness declined by 49%” Taken from HOUSING FIRST: PROVEN SUCCESS, City and County of Honolulu <
<http://www.honolulu.gov/housing/homelessness/ohou-first.html>>

Climate Solutions for Bloomington- Citizen Guide- DRAFT

Founded in 2014, Project Drawdown® is a nonprofit organization that seeks to help the world reach “Drawdown”— the future point in time when levels of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere stop climbing and start to steadily decline. *Drawdown: The Most Comprehensive Plan Ever Proposed to Reverse Global Warming* is a New York Times best-selling book from 2017, which acts as a guidepost for the most effective climate solutions. The following climate actions are drawn from the book and ranked by effectiveness, based on the total amount of greenhouse gas emissions the activity can potentially avoid or remove from the atmosphere. Checkout Drawdown’s website [here](#).

Once you’ve read this page, take [this CNN quiz](#) about the most impactful climate actions as referenced by Drawdown.

Additionally, these actions align with Bloomington’s Sustainability Action Plan (SAP). View the SAP sections [here](#).

Energy and The Built Environment

1.) **Action:** Rooftop Solar Panels

Impact: # 10 in [Drawdown](#)

Solar energy and rooftop panels are becoming more affordable as individuals around the world continue to install them on their homes and commercial buildings. Rooftop solar panels generate energy at the site of consumption (your home), avoiding energy loss associated with grid transmission (when energy travels from the grid to your home). Once installed, you can reduce the cost of powering your home by selling back your excess energy to the grid (when installed before July 1, 2022 or until utility reaches 1.5% of their peak load) through net metering. Drawdown projects that rooftop solar PV will grow from 0.4% of electricity generation globally to 7% by 2050. This growth can avoid 24.6 gigatons of greenhouse gas emissions and in the next three decades, it is estimated that individual rooftop solar will save \$3.4 trillion in energy costs globally.

Resources:

- [COB solar page](#)
- **Local solar contractors list**
- [SIREN](#): The Solar Indiana Renewable Energy Network (SIREN), operates the Solarize program in Bloomington. Sign up for a Solarize information session [here](#)
- [Indiana Solar for All \(ISFA\)](#): a project out of the nonprofit, [Center for Sustainable Living](#), which works with individuals to help offset the cost of solar panels

- Check out the non-profit [Solar United Neighbors](#) for existing solar incentives, the existing barriers with solar, and learn about their co-op model
- Net-metering in Indiana [explained](#)
- Don't own your own home and would still like to support the renewable energy market? Sign up for the [Duke's GoGreen Energy program](#), which offsets electricity use by supporting wind projects in Iowa.

1.) Action: Lower your energy usage at home with energy efficiency quick fixes

Impact: [Building energy use is a major contributor to GHG emissions](#) and there are many simple actions you can take to lower your energy usage at home and save money on your utility bills. When you conserve energy, you are drawing less energy from the grid, which is primarily generated from burning coal. According to the [U.S. Energy Information Administration](#), approximately 70 percent of Indiana's electricity came from coal-fired power plants in 2017, approximately 20 percent from natural gas, and approximately 6 percent from renewable energy sources (5 percent from wind and 1 percent from solar). From lowering your thermostat to reducing your hot water heater temperature to 120°F, you have the power to save money .

Resources:

- Check out this [list of easy fixes](#) to lower your energy usage at your home/apartment
- Take a look at [Duke's at home energy efficiency tips](#)
- If you own your home, [sign up for a free home energy audit](#). A Duke Energy member will conduct a free energy assessment to determine needed upgrades and give tips on easy fixes to save money and energy
- Check out the [Energy Star website](#) for a list of energy efficient products
- Sign up for the Duke Energy [My Home Energy Interactive](#) data portal to track your energy consumption to find ways to reduce energy consumption
- Check out additional tips for saving energy in your home from [energy.gov](#)
- Enroll in Duke Energy's [Power Manager Program](#) and [Flex Savings Options pilot program](#), which helps save energy during peak energy periods by lowering your hot water heater and A/C's energy usage.

2.) Action: Insulate and Seal your home

Impact: Insulation is #31 in [Drawdown](#)

Insulation prevents unwanted airflow from your home and makes heating and cooling your home more energy efficient and will save you money in the long-run.

Drawdown projects that if 1.6-2% of existing residential and commercial buildings in temperate and tropical climates added insulation 17-19 gigatons of emissions can be prevented, resulting in \$751-831 trillion in savings.

Resources:

- Duke Energy [weatherization tips](#)
- Apply for the federal Weatherization Assistance Program (WAP) for income-qualified households
 - [WAP Fact Sheet](#)
 - [Federal website](#)
 - [Indiana website](#)

3.) Action: Upgrade to LED lighting

Impact: #44 in [Drawdown](#) for commercial buildings and #33 for households.

Lighting accounts for 15% of global electricity use. LED bulbs use 90% less energy for the same amount of light than an incandescent bulb and half as much as compact fluorescents, (and without toxic mercury). LEDs differ from all other lightbulbs because most (80%) of their energy is used to generate light, not heat, compared to older light bulbs. LEDs also last significantly longer than other lightbulbs, which outweighs their upfront cost. Globally as we replace less-efficient bulbs with LEDs, 7.8 gigatons of carbon dioxide emissions could be avoided in residences and 5 gigatons in commercial buildings globally.

Resources:

- Shop the [Duke Energy online store](#) for heavily discounted LED lights
- If you own your home, sign up for Duke's [Free Home Energy Assessment](#) and receive free LED bulbs

4.) Action: Install a smart thermostat

Impact: #57 in [Drawdown](#)

Smart thermostats have the technology to learn your temperature preferences based on your schedule and can self-adjust the temperature in your home based on times of peak energy use, peak prices, and peak emissions. You can even adjust your thermostat remotely from your smartphone or tablet. The result of using a smart thermostat? More energy savings, lower utility bills, and a more comfortable living environment. Drawdown projects that smart thermostats will grow from 0.4% of households to 46% of households with internet access by 2050 (which is equivalent to 704 million homes!).

Resources:

- [ENERGY STAR smart thermostats](#)

5.) Action: Install low-flow faucets, showerheads, and toilets

Impact:

Toilets account for approximately [30% of your home water usage](#). In fact, according to the [Indiana EPA](#), if just one out of 10 households in Indiana replaced its older, inefficient toilets with [WaterSense labeled models](#), it would save residents 2.5 billion gallons and \$15 million in water bills annually. In the average household, hot water consumption accounts for about 18% of energy usage (see Utilities fact sheet below). Installing low-flow faucets and showerheads will lower the amount of water used at one time, which will also reduce the amount of hot water you consume. Over 60% of the electricity purchased by the City of Bloomington is used to treat and pump water and wastewater. By lowering your water consumption, you're helping reduce electricity demand.

Resources:

- If you own your home, sign up for Duke's [Free Home Energy Assessment](#) and receive an energy efficient showerhead (in addition to LED bulbs)
- [Benefits of water conservation information sheet](#) from the Bloomington Utilities Department
- Go through this [checklist to detect water leaks](#) in your home or apartment
- Check out this [list of EPA WaterSense labeled products](#), which will help you conserve water and money.

Transportation

1.) Action: Take public transportation

Impact: #37 in [Drawdown](#). Anytime you opt to take the bus instead of driving, you are reducing greenhouse gas emissions and helping to relieve traffic congestion. With fewer people driving, fewer car accidents will occur, and air quality will improve. According to Drawdown, urban transport is the single largest source of transportation-related emissions, and growing.

Resources:

- Check out [Bloomington Transit's bus routes and schedules](#) to see which routes work best for you

2.) Action: Lease or purchase an Electric Vehicle (EV) for your next car

Impact: #26 in [Drawdown](#).

When electric vehicles (EVs) are charged from energy off the grid, greenhouse gas emissions drop by 50% and when you charge them using solar energy, emissions drop by 95% compared to gasoline powered vehicles. EVs are a great leasing option because their technology is rapidly changing, so when it is time to lease a new car (after approximately

two years) you can get an even more efficient EV. Also, EVs are simpler to make and require significantly less maintenance than gasoline powered vehicles. According to Drawdown, if electric car ownership rises to 16-23% of total passenger km at a first cost of \$4.5-5.8 trillion, by 2050, 11.9-15.7 gigatons of carbon dioxide from fuel combustion could be avoided as well as \$15.3-21.8 trillion in fuel costs.

Resources:

- The [Duke Energy EV Selection Tool](#) compares EV models to help you pick an EV that's right for you
- Check out the [available federal tax credits](#) for new EVs and new PHEVs (plug-in hybrid EV)
- Use this [interactive map](#) to locate charging stations near you
- There are no existing state incentives for EVs or charging stations, see the [IN.gov site](#) for general information about EVs

3.) Action: Ridesharing & Carpooling

Impact: #75 in [Drawdown](#).

Ridesharing & carpooling are a cost-free way to lower GHG emissions. According to Drawdown, assuming that carpooling rises in the U.S. and Canada from 10% of car commuters in 2015 to 15% by 2050, and from an average of 2.3 to 2.5 people per carpool. This could reduce emissions by 0.3 gigatons of carbon dioxide and result in \$185.6 billion in savings.

Resources:

- Sign up for a [Zip Car membership](#)

4.) Action: Ride a bike, scooter, or an electric bike for short trips (<5 miles) instead of driving

Impact: Electric bikes (e-bikes) are #69 in [Drawdown](#).

Globally increasing e-bike ridership alone could avoid 1 gigaton of CO2 emissions and save \$226 billion dollars by 2050. E-bikes are similar to hybrid vehicles in that they are partially powered by you when you pedal and partially by a small battery-powered motor that you can plug into an outlet. E-bikes have more emissions than a conventional bike, but they still outperform cars in short trips. Walking of course, is the lowest carbon solution, followed by conventional bikes, and then e-bikes.

Resources:

- [Bloomington biking resources](#)
- [Walking and biking trails in Bloomington](#)
- [Volunteer](#), get the bike tools you need, or get your bike repaired at the Center for Sustainable Living's [Bloomington Community Bike Project](#)

- Learn the Bloomington [scooter guidelines](#)
- Visit Bloomington's local bike shops:
 - [Bicycle Garage Inc.](#)
 - [Revolution Bike & Bean](#)
 - [Bikesmiths](#)
- Report necessary repairs to roads and bike lanes on the City's reporting website: [uReport](#)

5.) Action: Telecommuting

Impact: #63 in [Drawdown](#).

The authors of Drawdown envision a world in which we commute majoritively via a Zoom/Webex. The COVID-19 pandemic has forced most individuals to work from home, which [reduced global CO2 emissions by 17%](#), reaching 2006 levels. Moving forward, many more people will continue to work from home and companies will re-evaluate what travel is truly required and what can be replaced by telecommuting. According to Drawdown (which was written prior to the COVID-19 pandemic), by avoiding emissions from business air travel, telepresence and telecommuting can reduce emissions by 2 gigatons by 2050 (assuming that 140 million business trips are avoided during that time). For organizations, the investment in telepresence will save organizations \$1.3 trillion in travel costs and over 82 billion unproductive travel hours.

Local Food and Agriculture

1.) **Action:** Adopt a plant-rich diet

Impact: #4 in [Drawdown](#).

If cattle were their own nation, they would be the world's third-largest emitter of greenhouse gases. Not only does reducing your consumption of meat and dairy products lower your carbon footprint, plant-rich diets are also much healthier and can reduce the risk of chronic disease. Adopting a plant-rich diet is one of the most impactful actions an individual can take to address climate change. Moreover, adopting plant-rich diets can result in \$1 trillion in annual global savings from avoided healthcare costs. If 50% of the world's population reduces meat consumption overall and limits their calorie intake to a healthy 2,500 calories, at least 26.7 gigatons of emissions could be avoided.

Resources:

- Here is a list of new [vegetarian cookbooks](#)
- [Explore restaurants in Bloomington](#) with vegetarian options

- [Tips from the Mayo Clinic](#) to ensure you are getting all necessary nutrients when eating a vegetarian or vegan diet

2.) **Action:** Grow your own food

Impact: Greenhouse gas emissions are associated with every step of the process from planting to harvesting and eventually getting to your dinner table. Growing your own food will avoid these emissions and will taste better too! Additionally, you will learn about (and can teach others!) where our food comes from and support local climate resiliency.

Resources:

- [Rent a garden plot](#)
- [Get involved at the IU Campus Garden](#)
- Volunteer with the [Bloomington Community Orchard](#)

3.) **Action:** Purchase locally grown/produced food

Impact: When you purchase food that was grown or produced locally, you are avoiding greenhouse gas emissions associated with food transportation and large scale agricultural practices. Additionally, locally produced food helps support our local economy and helps connect us to food, by developing a care and relationship for the people growing the food. It's a win-win!

Resources:

- Shop at one of Bloomington's farmers markets:
 - [Order online](#) or shop in-person at the [Bloomington Farmers Market](#)
 - [Bloomington Winter Farmers Market](#)
 - [People's Market](#)
- Check out the [Bloomington Farm Vendor Directory](#) to purchase directly from local farmers
- Become a [subscriber to the Muddy Fork Bakery](#) to get freshly baked, local bread and other baked goods
- Sign up for a Community Sourced Agriculture (CSA) program:
 - [Schacht Farm CSA](#)
 - [Heartland Family Farm CSA](#)
- Eat at restaurants that source their food locally
- Shop in the local food section of grocery stores (such as Fresh Thyme or Bloomingfoods)
- Look for the [Indiana Grown](#) label on food products at the grocery store



Waste

1.) **Action:** Reduce your food waste

Impact: #3 solution in [Drawdown](#). According to Drawdown, one third of the food raised or prepared does not make it from farm or factory to fork. On a global scale, food waste accounts for 8% of greenhouse gas emissions, which includes food grown on farms, thrown away by grocery stores, and thrown away by consumers. After taking into account the adoption of plant-rich diets, if 50% of food waste is reduced by 2050, Drawdown estimates 26.2 gigatons of carbon dioxide emissions could be avoided. Reducing food waste will also result in less deforestation for additional farmland, which would prevent 44.4 gigatons of additional emissions.

Resources:

- Subscribe to a service like [Imperfect Foods](#) that delivers “ugly” produce that would have otherwise been thrown away or unused by grocery stores.
- Learn creative ways to reduce food waste, such as re-purposing carrot tops and kale stems.

2.) **Action:** Composting

Impact: #60 solution in [Drawdown](#)

Composting converts food waste and other organic material (yard clippings etc.) into stable, nutrient-rich soil and sequesters carbon. When food waste ends up in a landfill, it doesn't have the right conditions (heat, microbes) to break down properly, which results in methane emissions. Put simply: you put back into the soil what you take out. According to Drawdown, if all high-income countries reached a 57% composting rate and low-income countries reached at 38% composting rate, composting could avoid methane emissions from landfills equivalent to 2.3 gigatons of carbon dioxide by 2050.

Resources:

- Compost either by:
 - Signing up for composting pick-up or drop-off bin service with [Green Camino](#) for either your [residence](#) or [business](#)
 - [Compost your yard waste](#) between April and December with the City
 - Starting a [backyard composting](#) pile

- Check out the [Indiana Recycling Coalition's Food Scrap initiative](#) for more information
- Watch this [video](#) to learn more about composting as a climate solution

3.) **Action:** Reduce single-use plastic

Impact: According to Drawdown, global waste production multiplied tenfold over the past century and it is expected to double again by 2025. A great way to avoid contributing to this problem is to reduce your use of single-use plastics. According to [Drawdown](#), globally we produce around 310 million tons of plastic each year. This equates to 83 pounds per person and plastic production is expected to quadruple by 2050. Not only is this an immense amount of waste but plastic has a large carbon footprint because the majority of plastic we interact with in our daily lives is derived from fossil fuels.

Resources:

- Buy in bulk at the grocery store
- Replace single-use plastic items with reusable ones, such as water bottles, coffee mugs, grocery bags, produce bags, straws, utensils (when getting carry-out), glass tupperware, reusable wax wrap to replace plastic wrap,
- If you do use plastic, try to use 1 and 2 plastics, since they have the highest recyclability rate
- Bring your own to-go container when you go out to eat to carry home leftovers
- Say no to straws, to-go utensils, and napkins when ordering takeout
- Read [101 Ways to Go Zero Waste](#) by Kathryn Kellogg or check out her [website](#) to learn about ways to avoid single-use plastic

4.) **Action:** Learn recycling best practices

Impact: #55 in Drawdown.

Household recycling is a great way to reduce landfill waste by putting paper, plastic, and glass back into value chains to be reused as a new product. If the average worldwide recycling rate increases to 65% of total recyclable waste, household recycling could avoid 2.8 gigatons of carbon dioxide emissions by 2050 and \$71.1 billion net savings.

Resources:

- Learn how to [read the labels](#)
- City of Bloomington Sanitation Department [recycling resources](#)
- [Republic waste recycling best practices](#)

- Watch [The Story of Plastic](#) documentary to learn about the history and current state of recycling

5.) **Action:** Shop second-hand

Impact: By shopping second-hand, you are avoiding GHG emissions associated with creating and transporting new products, from clothing to home appliances.

Resources:

- Check out some of the second-hand and vintage stores in Bloomington:
 - [Goodwill](#)
 - [Plato's Closet](#)
 - [Hothouse Market](#)
 - [Cherry Canary Vintage](#)
 - [Office Clothier](#)
 - Visit Bloomington's antique stores for furniture and home decor
 - [Bloomington Antique Mall](#)
 - [Westbury Antique Market](#)
 - [The Warehouse](#)
 - Watch [The True Cost](#), a documentary about the fast fashion industry
-

Ecosystem Management

1.) **Action:** Replace lawn grass with native, resilient plants

Impact: Lawn grass requires a significant amount of fertilizer, pesticides, and water to maintain. Also, not only is lawn care time consuming and expensive, lawn equipment such as mowers and leaf blowers emit greenhouse gases, contributing to global climate change. By replacing a significant portion (if not all) of your lawn with native groundcovers that can thrive during both dry and wet periods, your yard will be more resilient to the effects of climate change.

Resources:

- See these tips for [native plant landscaping](#)
- Sign up to get your lawn classified as a [Certified Wildlife Habitat](#) to make your yard a haven for native plant and animal species

2.) **Action:** Plant shade trees

Impact: Planting shade trees in your yard will help reduce the amount of energy you use in your home. Also, trees act as carbon sinks, absorbing carbon dioxide

from the air and releasing oxygen. Shade trees will beautify your yard and save you money in the long run.

Resources:

- Check out this [guide](#) for where to plant trees to maximize shading
- Here are some [tips for correctly planting trees](#)

3.) Action: Help restore our Bloomington's natural landscape

Impact: Maintaining ecosystem health requires careful management of natural habitats and living organisms to preserve their social, environmental, and economic benefits to the community. Invasive species cause significant environmental, social, and economic harm by competing with native species for resources and overtaking areas they inhabit, potentially leading to the extinction of native species. It is important to focus on restoring native plants to our landscape because the strategic preservation and enhancement of greenspace can provide habitat for wildlife, ease tensions between humans and animals, and create community amenities. See Chapter 7 of the [Bloomington Sustainability Action Plan](#) for more information.

Resources:

- [Volunteer](#) to help maintain the Monroe County parks system with the Adopt-a-Flowerbed program
- [Volunteer](#) to help on outdoor restoration and beautification projects

4.) Action: Help improve Bloomington's surface water quality

Impact:

Resources:

- [Volunteer](#) in the Adopt-a-Drain program from the City of Bloomington Utilities department

Get involved with local environmental nonprofits:

- [Center for Sustainable Living](#)
- [Sycamore Land Trust](#)
- [Indiana Forest Alliance](#)
- [Indiana Recycling Coalition](#)
- [Carbon Neutral Indiana](#)