

THE CHARGING STATION

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF A²ZERO AND
THE ANN ARBOR OFFICE OF SUSTAINABILITY AND INNOVATIONS



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ABOUT THE EDITOR



Claire DeBlanc (she/her) supports circular economy initiatives, including A²ZERO clothing swaps, electronics collections, and circular economy action planning. To learn more, reach out to Claire at cdeblanc@a2gov.org.



Residents engaging with a map of the circular economy in Ann Arbor at the 2026 Ann Arbor Summer Fest.

WELCOME

Welcome from the City of Ann Arbor's Office of Sustainability and Innovations (OSI). In this issue of the Charging Station, OSI is delighted to share details about reducing wasted materials through swapping, connecting people and resources, and planning ahead. If you are interested in learning more about any of the organizations featured in this issue and how you can get involved, more detail can be found on our website: www.a2gov.org/sustainability. As always, thank you for your interest in sustainability activities in Ann Arbor!

LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Equity and justice are at the center of A²ZERO and staff in OSI are continuing to ground our work in these critical principles. In that light, we'd like to take a moment to honor the geographic and historic space we share. We acknowledge that the land the City of Ann Arbor occupies is the ancestral, traditional, and contemporary lands of the Anishinaabe and Wyandot peoples. We further acknowledge that our city stands, like almost all property in the United States, on lands obtained, generally in unconscionable ways, from indigenous peoples. The taking of this land was formalized by the Treaty of Detroit in 1807. Knowing where we live, work, study, and recreate does not change the past, but a thorough understanding of the ongoing consequences of this past can empower us in our work to create a future that supports human flourishing and justice for all individuals.

CONNECTING THE DOTS

HOW ANN ARBOR IS MAKING CIRCULARITY COMPETITIVE WITH BUYING NEW

A circular economy doesn't just make sense for sustainability; it can save money, promote the creation of jobs, strengthen community connections, keep value local, reduce the growth of landfills, and make communities more resilient by reducing reliance on global supply chains. So why does the linear economy still dominate in our society? The simple answer: convenience. Ann Arbor is on a mission to make reuse, repair, recycling, reducing use, lending, and other circular activities more convenient in the daily lives of community members.



Shashiko workshop led by Ann Asplund from Ann-Other Day.

A circular economy is an economic system that generates value by redesigning, reusing, repairing, sharing, lending, reducing, and promoting activities that give goods and resources a new life or extend their useful life. A circular economy contrasts with our current economy, a linear economy, where material is extracted, made into products using large amounts of energy, resources, and time, and used once (or a few times) before being discarded.



Lydia McMullen-Laird from ZeroWaste.org leading a darning workshop during a swap.

This year, the Office of Sustainability and Innovations (OSI) launched monthly mending workshops that take place at the [monthly A²ZERO clothing swaps](#). These swaps are a gathering space for participants to freely exchange clothing. Before introducing mending workshops, clothing with rips and holes were not accepted at A²ZERO clothing swaps. This year, All Hands Active (an [A²ZERO Collaborator](#)) has participated in each monthly clothing swap, allowing participants to bring flawed items to be repaired, reused, and even swapped. Attendees can also learn how to make these repairs themselves, building skills that allow them to mend their clothing in the future.

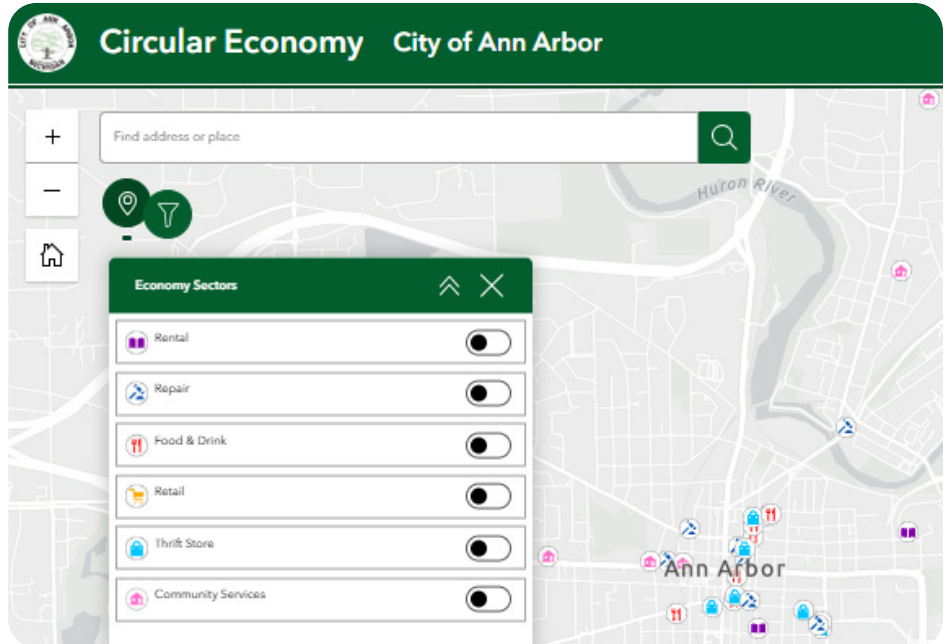
In addition to All Hands Active, a unique revitalization or repair workshop is offered each month such as denim repair, darning, natural dying, and screen printing. Repaired and revitalized items can be kept by the participant who brought them in, or they can be donated to the swap for someone else to enjoy. These workshops give items a chance for another life, preventing them from prematurely entering the landfill.

CONNECTING THE DOTS

HOW ANN ARBOR IS MAKING CIRCULARITY COMPETITIVE WITH BUYING NEW

CIRCULAR ECONOMY MAP

Recently, OSI released an updated [Ann Arbor area circular economy map](#), which now includes over 120 organizations that are part of the local circular economy. In Ann Arbor and the surrounding area, we have access to an abundance of circular economy services and opportunities. This map is a tool to connect people with local resources and materials and visually display the vast network of circular organizations.



CIRCULAR ECONOMY ACTION PLANNING

Since January 2023, OSI has been in the process of creating a circular economy action plan with input and guidance from Ann Arbor residents, businesses, institutions, and circular economy experts. This plan will provide a clear roadmap on how to fill current circularity gaps in Ann Arbor, and change systems to make circularity the default and single use something of the past. Stay tuned for updates on the action plan!

Resident advisors meeting to discuss the circular economy action plan.



WHAT COMES NEXT?

Through repair workshops, creating a visual guide of the circular economy in Ann Arbor, strategizing next steps, and so much more, Ann Arbor is making sure its future is circular. The foundation of Ann Arbor's circular economy exists thanks to the hard work of countless Ann Arbor residents. The next step is to continue uplifting and growing this work.

LESSONS IN "USING IT UP"

A REFLECTION ON (NOT) WASTING FOOD



Written by Azella Markgraf, Sustainable Food Analyst

One day last month, I opened my refrigerator to search for something for dinner. As I scanned the fridge, my eyes eventually settled on a container tucked in the back, behind the half-empty condiment bottles. Suddenly, a realization hit me - inside the container was a half-pound of leftover cooked vegetables and chickpeas that I made for dinner two weeks before and had packed away for later, now covered in spots of mold.

Reaching into the fridge, I removed the container and thought, how could this have happened? I had every intention of eating those leftovers. Nevertheless, at some point my spouse had moved the container to the back of the fridge while hunting for a snack. I got invited to a meal at a restaurant with friends. I stayed late at work finishing up a project. Soon, time got away from me, a dozen busy days had passed, and I had entirely forgotten about the leftovers. Before I knew it, I was staring down at a food waste nightmare - two-week-old food, spotted with mold, no chance of revival. A familiar pit in my stomach began to form. I composted the leftovers, feeling a twinge of shame.

I hate wasting food. I hate wasting food because I know that the [average American](#) household of four spends almost \$3,000 per year on food that does not get eaten. I hate wasting food because, as a food sustainability professional, I know how much care, effort, and how many resources are wasted when I toss food. I hate wasting food because it takes up landfill space, contributes to climate change, and because food that I didn't eat could have been shared with a friend, family member, or neighbor in need. And yet, I still occasionally let food go bad, leaving me feeling guilty when I need to face the bin.

And [research shows](#) that I'm not alone. When surveyed, most Americans (77%) report feeling guilty about wasting food. Still, consumers in the U.S. waste approximately [24.3 million tons](#) of food per year. In fact, households are the [number one source](#) of wasted food nationally, accounting for 33.5% of all food wasted in the United States. At the same time, [51% of people](#) say that it would be difficult to reduce waste in their homes. This data shows that, for the most part, it isn't that people don't understand that wasted food is a problem, but that they don't have the tools, skills, or resources they need to more efficiently manage food. On top of that,

Planning & Shopping

Preventing wasted food starts before we even go to the grocery store! By creating a realistic, flexible meal plan and shopping with a grocery list, you can make sure that you buy only the food that you need. Check out the resources below to help you plan & shop smarter.



< Meal Prep Mate

Create custom meal plans and shopping lists to help you avoid wasting food.



The Guest-imator

Accurately estimate how much food you need for your next dinner gathering.



Too Good to Go App >

Get deals on delicious local eats while helping to prevent food waste from local businesses.

Storing & Preserving

Storing food properly helps food last longer and keeps you safe. By learning the best places to store different foods, getting to know your fridge, and making use of simple food preservation techniques like freezing, you can stretch the shelf life of the foods that you buy.



< Refrigerator Guide

Learn how to properly stock your fridge to keep food fresh longer.



Interactive Storage Guide

Learn how to store different foods with this interactive storage guide.



Food Preservation Tip >

Make your food last longer by canning, freezing, fermenting and dehydrating.

Figure 1: An example of the resources available at a2gov.org/wastelessfood.

LESSONS IN "USING IT UP"

A REFLECTION ON (NOT) WASTING FOOD

busy lifestyles, changing schedules, picky family members, and budgetary constraints can get in the way, leading to waste despite good intentions.

With so many factors at play that make wasting food feel like an inevitability, what can we do to keep food from going bad? As it turns out, there are a few simple, but effective changes we can make in our kitchens to waste less. According to the [United States Environmental Protection Agency](#) (EPA), planning meals before shopping, shopping with a list (and sticking to it), and properly storing fruits, vegetables, and leftovers would make a big difference in how much food we waste at home. Additionally, [data](#) shows that most consumers misunderstand date labels, causing them to toss food that is still perfectly good to eat.

To help Ann Arbor residents make these changes, OSI has added a [Prevent Wasted Food](#) web page to the City's website sharing tips, tools, and resources that can help you waste less food at home. Focused around five scientifically proven methods to prevent wasted food at home, the page is designed to make it easier to plan ahead, shop smarter, cook with what you already have on hand, store food well, share excess, and know when food is too far gone to eat. With simple tools like a shopping list template and refrigerator storage guide, plus links to helpful resources, like the [Too Good to Go](#) app, the [Prevent Wasted Food](#) web page is available now to help you waste less at home.

After my own wasted food incident, I adopted a few of these tips into my household's food routine. For example, I added a "use it up" list next to the shopping list we already keep on a whiteboard on the fridge door (Figure 2). Now, instead of putting leftovers in a container and hoping someone remembers to eat them, I write the name of the dish on the "use it up" list as I put the leftovers away, and make sure the container is labeled with the contents and the date that the item was prepared. I also write down other items on the list, like fresh produce, that I know need to be cooked soon so they don't rot. This keeps the food that needs to be eaten first visible and gives whoever's cooking an easy starting point when they need to come up with something to make. This simple change adds only a few extra seconds to my daily routine, while helping my household waste less food and save money on groceries!

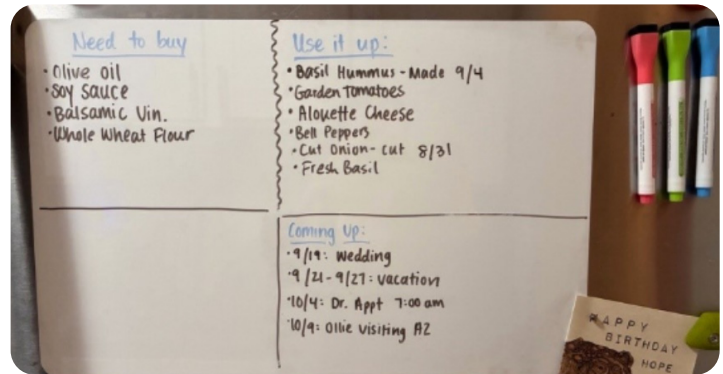


Figure 2: My "use it up" list from last week, showing that I need to use up my garden tomatoes, a cut onion, fresh basil, bell peppers, some soft cheese, and basil hummus.

"As it turns out, there are a few simple, but effective changes we can make in our kitchens to waste less."



Figure 3: Making roasted tomato soup with the produce that was on my "use it up" list. I finished it off with some basil, the soft cheese, and mixed in the basil hummus to add extra creaminess and protein! Not only did the soup taste amazing, but I was able to use up everything on my list!

Do you have a food-saver success story like this one, or another sustainability action that you've taken in your life? We want to hear about it! Share your "I Am A²ZERO" story with us at a2zero.org/IAm to join the movement, celebrate your sustainability successes, and inspire your community!

Do you want to start saving food, too? Check out a2gov.org/wastelessfood today to get started!

A²ZERO CLIMATE ACTION HERO

JONATHAN PARKER IS OCTOBER 2026'S HERO

Beginning January 2026, the Office of Sustainability and Innovations started recognizing and celebrating Climate Action Heroes operating right here, in our community. These Heroes are individuals who are taking steps to help the community achieve its A²ZERO goal of making a just and equitable transition to community-wide carbon neutrality by the year 2030. The ideal Climate Action Hero is someone who inspires others to make positive change.

Each month, a Hero will be selected by the Office of Sustainability and Innovations from all nominated applicants. Selected Climate Action Heroes will be celebrated with a column in the Ann Arbor Observer, as well as in this newsletter and on OSI's social media. All Climate Action Heroes will also be recognized at an awards ceremony during A²ZERO Week.

Individuals are encouraged to celebrate the Climate Action Heroes in their lives by nominating them at OSI.A2GOV.ORG/HERO. Anyone can submit a nomination, but the Hero themselves must live or work in Ann Arbor.



JONATHAN PARKER

SEWING THE SEEDS OF SUSTAINABILITY

Washtenaw County doing environmental restoration at County Farm Park. Jonathan is also a founding member of WREN (Washtenaw Restoration Ecology Network) which trains homeowners on different eradication techniques for woody invasive plants.

The City of Ann Arbor Office of Sustainability and Innovations is grateful for the impact Jonathan has had in the Ann Arbor community, and all of the action he has both taken and inspired. Learn more about Seeds to Community at the link above, about NAP at a2gov.org/NAP, and WREN at their [website](#). Learn more about building community and tackling climate change with your neighbors at [the Office of Sustainability and Innovations website](#).

Jonathan is best known for creating and starting the wildly successful Seeds to Community program. This innovative program helps anyone regardless of skill level to collect native seeds, winter sow the seeds and pot the seeds. Seeds to Community is run strictly on donations and offers hands-on events and workshops to bring attendees closer to nature and the seasons as they come and go.

Over the past two years, Seeds to Community has helped volunteers fill and take home over 1500 containers per year that equates to over 10,000 native plants per year. There are many ways for residents to join these impressive numbers, and all can be found at stewardshipnetwork.org/projects/seeds-to-community.

Jonathan is also a Natural Area Preservation (NAP) Volunteer Park Steward at Molin Nature Area where he has led environmental restoration of a highly degraded nature area. He also works part-time for

Thank you Jonathan for being a Climate Action Hero in our community!
Submit your Hero at OSI.A2GOV.ORG/HERO

A COLORFUL COLLECTION

This month, we spoke with Nikki, one of the co-founders of A Colorful Collection (ACC), to hear about their circularity work. ACC recently joined the A²ZERO Community Collaborator network as the 151st collaborator!



What are ACC's goals and how are you working towards those goals lately?

ACC is committed to creating a space where individuals of diverse backgrounds and identities feel seen, heard, and celebrated through publishing initiatives, literacy events, and collaborations with local community organizations. This past summer, ACC released their second children's book, *Yuna Choe & the Perfect Bowl of Rice*, in collaboration with author Jessica Choe and illustrator Celine Kim. ACC has also had the opportunity to collaborate with the Ypsilanti's YMCA to host several free pop-up book drives.

What are some projects you're excited to share with the community?

ACC tabled at A²ZERO Green Fair as well as the Zero Waste Fall Festival at the Trash Talk Tour in September. ACC is also co-hosting an A²ZERO x Climate Cafe x ACC event in October and a Filipino-American History Month (FAHM) Event in Boston at the end of October.

How does your work contribute to A²ZERO goals?

Our work contributes to A²ZERO by using storytelling as a way to engage, educate, and connect our community around issues related to sustainability and climate action. We hope to share diverse perspectives and stories that help make these topics more accessible and encourage people to see how sustainability connects to their everyday lives. Through our community blog, events and collaborations, we aim to create more opportunities for people to learn, connect, and participate in building a more sustainable community.



A Colorful Collection's founding members at their launch party.

COLLABORATOR HIGHLIGHT

A COLORFUL COLLECTION

How does sustainability factor into your work?

Sustainability factors into our work through our efforts to give books a second life. While creating and distributing physical books requires resources, we collect used and unwanted books and help place them in new homes rather than allowing them to go to waste. By repurposing books and connecting them with new readers, we encourage reuse while making books and stories more accessible to the community.

What are you looking forward to as your work progresses?

We are really looking forward to collaborating with different organizations and connecting with community members as our work progresses. Being able to engage in community, learn from them, and work alongside organizations that share similar goals is something we are especially excited about. It means a lot to see how collaborations can turn our work into something that genuinely supports the people we serve and makes a meaningful impact.

How can others get involved?

- Post on our community blog: <https://www.a-colorful-collection.com/community-blog>
- Share our website: [a-colorful-collection.com](https://www.a-colorful-collection.com)
- Share our social media! [Instagram: acolorfulcollection](#)
- Reach out for collaborations and partnerships!
- Tell us what you'd like to see! We want to hear from you—share your thoughts, ideas, feedback, or events you'd like to host.



Storytime at celebrations hosted by the Philippine American Mainstream Advocacy for Nonpartisan Associations, Inc.

COLLABORATOR HIGHLIGHT

COMPRENEW

Emily Nederveld is the Director of Impact Funding & Customer Service for Comprenew, a non-profit electronics recycler and refurbisher based in Grand Rapids. Comprenew collects and manages electronics for A²ZERO Household Electronics Collections. We interviewed Emily to learn more about what Comprenew is working on to promote circularity in Michigan!

Emily and other members of the Comprenew team in their sorting facility.



What are your organization's goals?

- Inspire individuals and organizations to treat used electronics in a way that doesn't harm the environment, but instead creates benefit, moving toward a world that is more sensitive to and aware of the impact of e-waste.
- Follow industry best practices and hold ourselves accountable through rigorous third-party certifications, including e-Stewards, R2v3, NAID-AAA, ISO 9001, ISO 14001, and ISO 45001.
- Grow and launch new certified recycling programs, such as VapeRenew, to address emerging and under-served e-waste streams.
- Expand Connect All Michigan Program (CAMP), our digital equity donation program, providing refurbished laptops to individuals and families who otherwise couldn't afford one.
- Grow our Adults With Autism Recycling Electronics (AWARE) team, providing job training and employment opportunities for adults with disabilities.
- Continue our community outreach through CORE, educating residential and corporate audiences on the importance of responsible e-waste recycling.
- Increase the overall volume of e-waste recycled, helping close the gap left by the fact that only 15-20% of e-waste is currently recycled.
- Work directly with original equipment manufacturers (OEMs) to encourage sustainability across their products, bringing greater accountability and transparency to the entire lifecycle of the electronics we all use.

How have you been working towards these goals lately?

Over the more than 40 years Comprenew has been in business, we have been steadily working toward these goals. To do this, we engage regularly with a strong group of stakeholders, including a wide spectrum of corporations, government leaders, and individuals across Michigan, ensuring our work stays connected to the needs of the communities and organizations we serve. More recently, that work has included launching VapeRenew to address a new and under-served e-waste stream, continuing to grow CAMP through new community partnerships and grant funding, strengthening our AWARE team through our ongoing relationships with Kent ISD and Grandville's transitional programs, and expanding our CORE outreach efforts to raise awareness around the importance of proper e-waste recycling. We've also continued to maintain and build on our certifications, ensuring accountability remains at the center of everything we do.

How does your work contribute to A²ZERO goals?

As the electronics collection partner for the City of Ann Arbor's A²ZERO program, Comprenew ensures that unwanted electronic devices collected from the community are diverted from landfills through reuse, refurbishment and repair, and certified recycling. Electronic waste is the fastest-growing solid waste stream globally, and roughly 80% of the carbon emissions associated with computing devices come from embodied carbon, the emissions generated during extraction, manufacturing, and distribution, rather than from use. By keeping devices in circulation longer through reuse and refurbishment, rather than allowing them to be discarded and replaced with newly manufactured products, Comprenew's work directly reduces the embodied carbon footprint tied to electronics consumption in Ann Arbor, supporting the circular economy goals at the heart of Strategy 5.

COLLABORATOR HIGHLIGHT

COMPRENEW

Comprenew staff sorting electronics.

How does your work contribute to A²ZERO goals? (continued)

This work also creates opportunity beyond its environmental impact. Much of the disassembly work behind our reuse and refurbishment process is carried out by our AWARE team, made up of individuals living with autism who are trained and employed through this program. In this way, the devices collected with A²ZERO don't just support Ann Arbor's carbon neutrality goals, they also help create meaningful employment for a population that too often faces barriers to finding it.

What are you looking forward to as your work progresses?

As our partnership with the City of Ann Arbor continues, we're looking forward to growing the volume of electronics collected and diverted from landfills through the A²ZERO program, helping the community make even more progress toward Strategy 5's circular economy goals. We're also excited to continue raising awareness among Ann Arbor residents and businesses about the true impact of proper electronics disposal, particularly the connection between reuse and reduced embodied carbon, since so much of the environmental cost of electronics comes before a device is ever used.

Looking ahead, we're excited to see manufacturers build products that last longer and are easier to recycle. Some products today are designed in ways that make them difficult to take apart safely, requiring far more time and effort to recycle properly than necessary. We'd love to see that change, with products designed from the start to be disassembled efficiently, so they can be recycled the right way. As electronic waste keeps growing faster than almost any other kind of waste, we're glad to keep being a partner Ann Arbor can count on, and to push the whole industry toward better choices.



How can others get involved?

- Bring your electronics recycling and ITAD needs directly to Comprenew, ensuring retired devices are handled to the highest certified standards.
- Visit a collection event hosted by Comprenew in your community.
- Support CAMP by referring individuals in need of a laptop, or by contributing financially to help fund laptop donations.
- Explore partnership opportunities with AWARE if you're a school or transitional program to create hands-on job training pathways for adults with disabilities.
- Share information about the importance of proper e-waste recycling to help spread awareness.
- Consider joining Comprenew's Board of Directors, as we periodically look to expand or broaden our board representation.
- Visit www.comprenew.org to learn more and get a full description of all the services Comprenew offers.
- Visit www.shopcomprenew.org, a great place to buy Comprenew refurbished and supported electronics at affordable prices.

AMBASSADOR HIGHLIGHT

A²ZERO AMBASSADORS: PROJECT TEAM CIRCULARITY

A²ZERO Ambassadors play an important role in achieving A²ZERO goals. Over 12 weeks, Ambassadors learn about sustainability in Ann Arbor and are connected with opportunities to take action. This month we spoke with an Ambassador Project Team that is hosting a community Halloween Costume Swap! See below to learn about Sarah Beth Hartman, Ivy Miller, and Lexi Crill's work!

What are your team's goals?

We are hosting a community clothing and Halloween costume swap on Oct. 3. Our goal is to support the circular economy and reduce waste by helping seasonal items find new homes.

How are you working to those goals?

Our team has been meeting weekly to plan this event, which will be held at the Argus Farms Cafe on Packard. Additionally, all three of us graduated from the A²ZERO Ambassador program this spring, so we are excited to bring our new sustainability knowledge to the community. The clothing and costume swap will help locals build their fall wardrobes and celebrate Halloween more sustainability this year, while also perfecting a replicable model for anyone to host future circular economy events and make a cumulative positive impact on waste reduction, carbon neutrality, and environmental justice.

What are some aspects of your project you're excited to share with the community?

Halloween costumes generate a lot of waste because they are often treated as single-use items, but they can be reused! Our swap will reduce discarded material locally while helping community members find their next trick-or-treating getup.

How does your work contribute to A²ZERO goals?

This community clothing and costume swap was born from A²ZERO, and will in turn help advance the goals of A²ZERO towards carbon neutrality, equity, and holistic sustainability. Being a community-centric event that is open to all, we aim to make this event as accessible as possible, providing opportunities for all members of the Ann Arbor area to obtain free, pre-loved clothing and costume options as well as an easy, sustainable way to donate unwanted pieces. By contributing to circular economy efforts, we will be simultaneously reducing the amount of clothing that ends up in landfills and the amount of new materials produced — as both of these are significant environmental issues, facilitating the swap allows us to take local action to combat the global climate crisis.



AMBASSADOR HIGHLIGHT

A²ZERO AMBASSADORS: PROJECT TEAM CIRCULARITY

How does sustainability factor into your work?

Sustainability is at the core of our community swap; by extending the lives of clothing and costume pieces, we are reducing textile waste and resources consumed in the manufacturing of these items. Halloween costumes are a major contributor to fast fashion, responsible for a great deal of environmental pollution and greenhouse gas emissions, while consuming large quantities of water, energy, and materials to create items that are often only used a couple times before ending up in landfills or dumped unwanted in lower-income communities. Clothing swaps allow community members to trade items, find new homes for pieces they no longer want, and avoid purchasing new items. Moving toward a cradle-to-cradle model of reuse will help eliminate the harms associated with the extractive creation and irresponsible disposal of textiles.

What are you looking forward to as your work progresses in the future?

We are so excited for members of the public to be able to host their own swaps using the replication guide. The process has been straightforward and enjoyable. Swaps are a great way to reduce waste from our everyday lives, whether it be with a community you are a part of, or just meeting up with friends. Financially, swaps are also great for individuals and families looking to reduce costs and contribute back by swapping outgrown or underutilized items.

How can others get involved?

We are currently looking for volunteers to help run the swap! You can sign up at [the Costume Swap's volunteer page](#). Everyone can also get involved by coming to the swap. You don't need to bring anything other than yourself to participate, but all types of clothing, accessories, and family-friendly costumes are welcome! Please RSVP and check the list of unacceptable items: <https://luma.com/7f37yeb8>

Recent monthly A²ZERO clothing swap at City Hall.



JOIN AN UPCOMING SWAP

Clothing and Costume Swap

Oct. 3, 1 - 4 PM | Argus Farm Stop,
Packard Cafe

Monthly A²ZERO Clothing Swap

Oct. 15, 4 - 7 PM | City Hall, Council
Chambers

Monthly A²ZERO Clothing Swap

Nov. 19, 4 - 7 PM | City Hall, Council
Chambers

Monthly A²ZERO Clothing Swap

Dec. 17, 4 - 7 PM | City Hall, Council
Chambers

Get notified of any
new swaps and RSVP at
lu.ma/a2zeroclothingswaps

[Learn how to host your own swap
by checking out our guide!](#)

See all of our upcoming events at
osi.a2gov.org/events.

FROM THE A²ZERO COMMUNITY COOKBOOK

VIEW THIS RECIPE AND 70+ MORE AT OSI.A2GOV.ORG/COOKBOOK

BEET, GINGER, & CARROT SLAW

From the Kitchen of: Trinity Health Ann Arbor Lifestyle Medicine

Preparation Time: 15 minutes | **Yield:** 4-6 portions

This slaw combines “the sweetness of carrots and ginger with the zing of apple cider vinegar” for a delicious, easy way to enjoy fresh beets. It requires no cooking and comes together in just 15 minutes!

Fresh beets, carrots, and green onions grow well in Michigan’s climate and these veggies are available fresh from local farms in the autumn months. The recipe’s authors suggest you consider “growing your own or checking out localdifference.org to learn about when these ingredients are in season and what farms, farmers markets, or stores carry them.”

Skeptical of beets? The team at Trinity Health Ann Arbor says that “this dish has converted many beet-averse eaters into beet lovers” in their free Cooking with Plants class. They share, “we’ve loved seeing how many people who thought they hated beets have been converted to beet aficionados after trying this recipe. Kids included!”



INGREDIENTS:

- 2 medium red beets, washed, peeled, and shredded
- 1 large carrot, washed, peeled, and shredded
- 1 (1-inch) piece of ginger, peeled and minced
- 2-3 green onions, trimmed and thinly sliced
- 3-4 Tablespoons apple cider vinegar
- 1-2 Tablespoons fresh orange juice
- 1/4 cup unsalted sunflower seeds

INSTRUCTIONS:

- Add all of the ingredients to a medium bowl.
- Stir the slaw until it is well-combined.
- Eat as-is, or use it as a topping for a veggie burger, grain bowl, or salad.
- Store leftovers in the fridge for up to 5 days.



DID YOU KNOW?

Beets are typically harvested mid-summer through late fall, but can be stored through the winter for year-round local eating!

ANNOUNCEMENTS

THANK YOU TO EVERYONE WHO CAME TO GREEN FAIR!

Thank you to everyone who joined us at the 26th Annual Green Fair Sept. 18! We loved talking about everything from heat pumps to embroidery with you. A special thank you to all of our A²ZERO Collaborators and exhibitors who showed up and brought their talent and enthusiasm for sustainability.

We're Hiring! If you know of a qualified individual with skills in community resilience, climate adaptation, hazard mitigation, and social equity, encourage them to apply for our Community Resilience Specialist position at a2gov.org/jobs.

OSI Launches Community Conversation on Offsets

OSI launched a multi-month engagement process around carbon offsets – a key component of meeting the community's 2030 carbon neutrality goals. A new Engage Ann Arbor page, a public website, and a series of public meetings were announced as part of the launch of this multi-month engagement effort. Details about this work, including links to all surveys and public forums, can be found at osi.a2gov.org/offsets.

Gretchen's House Wins \$10,000 Through Sustaining Ann Arbor Together Grant For Teacher Thrift

Rooted in community sustainability, the Gretchen's House Foundation Thrift: Teacher Resource & Community Hub space will serve as a vibrant, multi-purpose hub for both educators and the public. While teachers receive primary access to low-cost materials and free resources, the space and its reuse workshops are open to everyone to encourage community-wide reuse. Plus, the building is net-zero! Learn more at www.ghfdn.org/ghf-thrift.

The City of Ann Arbor Revamps its Circular Economy Map, Highlighting Over 120 Organizations

The City of Ann Arbor has released an updated [Ann Arbor area circular economy map](#), which now includes over 120 organizations that are part of the local movement to center reuse, repair, and regeneration. Community members interested in participating in a more sustainability-centered economy can use the map to find spots where they can thrift, donate, and repair items in addition to many other circular economy actions.

Come check out MAVD's new public EV chargers!

These chargers, obtained through the City of Ann Arbor's Commercial EV Charger Program, are now open to the public and located at 2723 South State St. Huge thank you to Matthew Riek and the MAVD team for working to get these installed.

UPCOMING EVENTS

A² SPARK TechTrek | Oct. 2, 1 - 5 PM | Liberty St

Find the A²ZERO table between 5th Ave and Division St at the Annual A² Spark TechTrek to learn more about Commercial Rebates and available resources for businesses looking to become more sustainable.

PUBLIC WORKS AND SOLID WASTE OPEN HOUSE

Oct. 3, 10 AM - 1 PM | Wheeler Service Center

Enjoy hands-on activities to learn about utility infrastructure, city forestry, street maintenance, solid waste, compost, and recycling programs. OSI staff will talk about the all-electric refuse truck, circularity programming, and other sustainability work as it relates to the wide world of public works! Learn more at a2gov.org/public-works.

CLIMATE WEEK 5K AND 10K | Oct. 4 | Downtown

The City of Ann Arbor is a proud sponsor of this year's Climate Week 5K and 10K! This race will have several sustainability features and educational components, including hand-crafted medals made from local wood.

UMMNH IDEAS DAY: POSTCARDS FROM A CHANGING PLANET | Oct. 4, 12:30 - 4 PM | UM Natural History Museum

Explore how communities are responding to climate change challenges and building research through research, innovation, and collaboration. UM Planet Blue Ambassadors and OSI staff will be leading Postcards from a Changing Planet, helping visitors explore how they talk about climate change in daily life.



EV Chargers at MAVD.

UPCOMING EVENTS

A²ZERO EATS! GUIDED TOUR: FARMERS MARKET SKILLS

Oct. 7, 11 AM - 12:30 PM | Ann Arbor Farmer's Market

Seasoned market shoppers and newcomers alike will enjoy this guided farmers market tour, which will share tips and tricks for how you can level up your farmers market shopping experience. Space is limited, so be sure to reserve your spot at [the A²ZERO Eats events page](#).

PORTER'S PLACE & DUNBAR TOWER OPEN HOUSE

Oct. 11, 4:30 - 6:30 PM | Dunbar Tower

This celebration marks an important milestone for the Ann Arbor Housing Commission as we open two new developments honoring the legacy of the Black West Side. Throughout the evening, guests can enjoy building tours, free food trucks, Kid Zone activities, and art and storytelling installations created with community members. At 5:00 PM, we'll gather for community remarks from residents, partners, and AAHC leadership. [RSVP here for the Dunbar Tower Open House.](#)

SFBC GATHERING: FARM TOUR & LOCAL FOOD DISCUSSION | *Oct. 12, 2 - 3 PM | University of Michigan Campus Farm*

Join the Ann Arbor Sustainable Food Business Coalition (SFBC), OSI, and the University of Michigan Campus Farm for a guided farm tour and open discussion on how farms and food businesses can work together for shared success. Register at [SFBCOct26.eventbrite.com](#).

COMMUNITY CARBON OFFSETS: A DISCUSSION WITH AUSTIN, TX & EARTHLY | *Oct. 13, 6 - 7 PM | Ann Arbor District Library, Downtown Branch, 4th Floor Meeting Room and [Virtual](#)*

Join us for an interactive discussion about community carbon offsets and the role they play in meeting our carbon neutrality goals. This interactive session will provide an opportunity for the public to share their thoughts and learn more about the City's climate goals and associated actions. Learn more at [engage.a2gov.org/carbon-offset-program](#).

MONTHLY CLOTHING SWAP | *Oct. 15, 4 - 7 PM | City Hall, Council Chambers*

Join our free A²ZERO clothing swaps on the third Thursday of each month! Swaps are an opportunity to refresh your wardrobe without buying new, as well as a chance to gift your gently used clothes to members of your community without contributing to the 92 million tons of textile waste generated globally each year. Learn more at [lu.ma/a2zeroclothingswaps](#).

PARK WORK DAY | *Oct. 16, 3 - 5 PM | Hansen Park*

Join the City of Ann Arbor's Office of Sustainability and Innovations and the Ann Arbor Parks Volunteer Program for a volunteer workday in Hansen Park. Whether you're a longtime volunteer or joining us for the first time, this is a great opportunity to spend time outdoors, connect with community members, and make a visible impact in a neighborhood park. No prior experience is necessary—staff will provide all tools, supplies, training, and guidance throughout the event. Sign up at [the Park Work Day volunteer page](#).

A²ZERO TREE EDUCATION SERIES: THREATS TO TREES & FALL COLORS | *Oct. 23, 6 - 7:30 PM | Leslie Science & Nature Center Energy House*

Join OSI and the Leslie Science & Nature Center for our new A²ZERO TREEducation Series, fourth Fridays from August to November! This month, we will be focused on the various threats our trees face in the Ann Arbor area - join us for a workshop where you'll learn about the impacts of climate change, diseases, people, and more on our trees, followed by a (weather permitting) guided walk showcasing the beautiful fall colors of Leslie Park.

ELECTRONICS COLLECTION | *Oct. 24 | Zion Lutheran Church*

Registration is required for this event and will open Oct. 3. These events are free and open to all Ann Arbor residents! Accepted items include desktop and laptop computers, tablets, gaming consoles and controllers, phones, cords/cables/wires, networking equipments, monitors, printers, batteries, and more. Visit [a2gov.org/electronics](#) to see the full list of accepted items and sign up.

FIRE STATION 4 RIBBON CUTTING | *Oct. 30, 1 PM 2415 S Huron Parkway*

Celebrate the opening of the state of Michigan's FIRST net-zero fire station at this grand opening and dedication.

CONNECT WITH OSI
sustainability@a2gov.org
FB: A2Zero | IG: @a2zero2030
LinkedIn | JOIN OUR MAILING LIST
YOUTUBE | [a2zero.org](#)

For more information on our upcoming events, please visit www.a2gov.org/sustainability/events.