



Sustainability **ENGAGEMENT** World Cup **HOUSTON**

Galveston Bay Council – April 2025



Background and Connection



- **FIFA World Cup 2026**
 - World's largest single sport event is coming to US, Canada, and Mexico in 2026
 - 48 national teams will compete in a 104-game tournament across 39 days in 16 host cities
 - Half of the world's population tunes in to watch
- **HOU26 - Houston Host Committee**
 - Houston is one of the sixteen host cities and will host 7 matches
 - Match dates are June 11- July 19, 2026
 - Houston matches are from June 14 - July 4, 2026
 - It will be the biggest sporting event of our lifetime hosted in Houston
 - Fan Festival in EADO for viewing matches without match tickets
- **FIFA requires a host city sustainability plan**
- **Spheres of Control**
 - FWC26 vs Host Committee

Environmental Plan



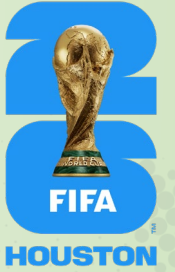
Cross-cutting themes

-  Sustainable event management
-  Environmental justice
-  Education, awareness & capacity-building
-  Measurement, verification, & reporting
-  Resilience
-  Innovation

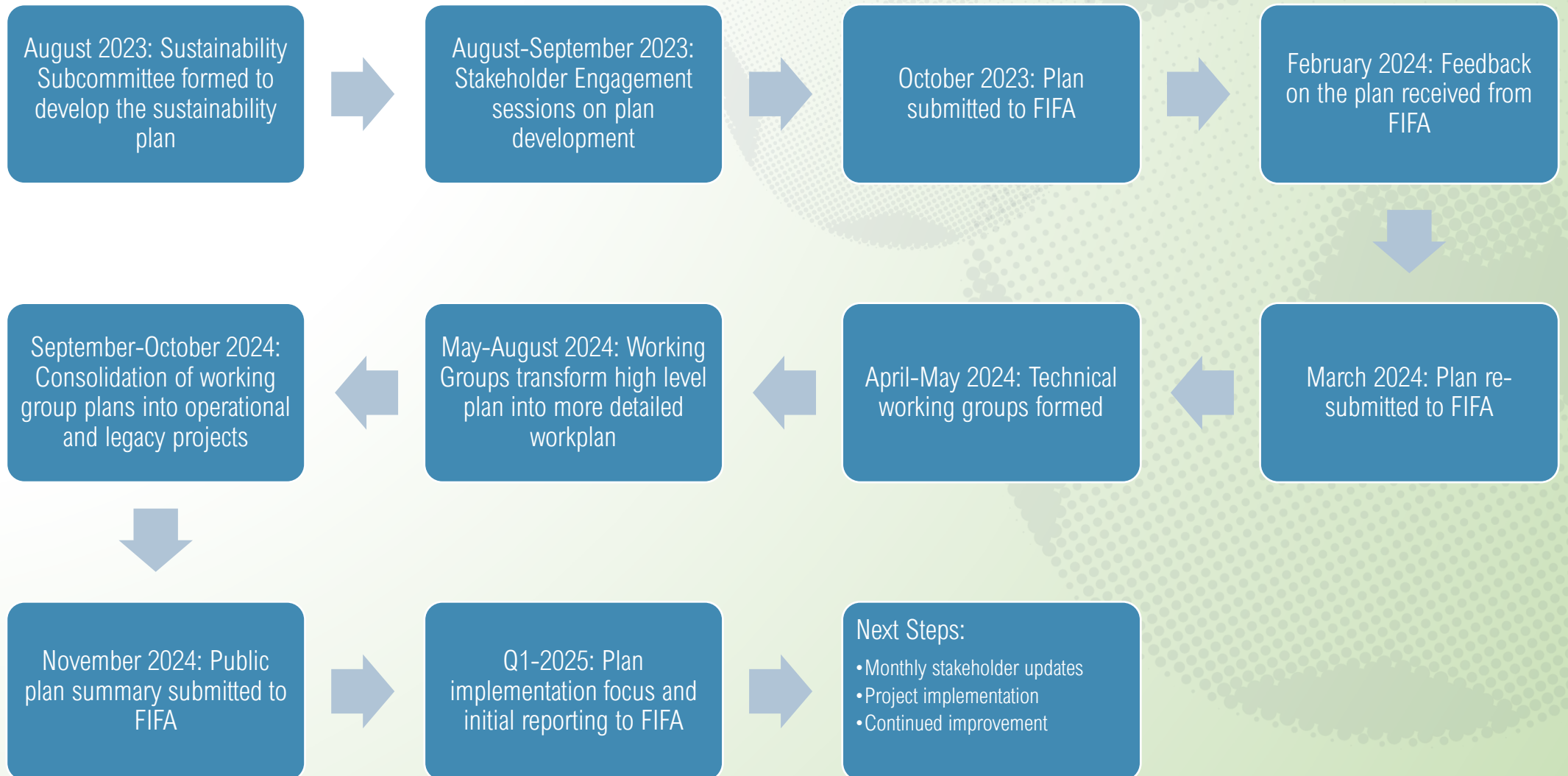
Technical areas

-  Climate & Energy
-  Air, Water, & Nature
-  Waste & Circularity
-  Low Carbon Transportation

Structure and Engagement Process



Timeline Recap



Key Sustainability Projects



Initiative	Summary
Fan Festival & Last Mile Strategy	Integrating Sustainability into Operations
Sustainable Event Management System	Development of a risk matrix, event checklist, policies, data & reporting, and sustainable procurement as a legacy for public sector.
Green Corridor Development	Green corridor linking NRG Park, downtown, and EADO/East End with sustainable initiatives and connectivity
Coordinated Sustainability Messaging	Strategic culture-oriented communication across various sites in the lead-up and during World Cup
Sustainability Toolkits for Hospitality	Practical guides for restaurants and hotels to implement sustainability actions aligned to the Sustainability Plan and associated incentives.
Houston Reuse Collective	Beverage container reuse in event venues (“big idea”).
University Engagement	Internships, research, and other collaborations.
K-12 Sustainability Education Programs	Menu of sustainability options to connect needs and resources and engage youth in the sustainability plan.
Sustainable Soccer Fields	Technical guidelines on soil, water, heat mitigation, flood control, waste, and energy for local park and school field resilience.
Air Quality	Youth summit, fall summit, and air quality improvement actions with potential for baseline and event measurement.
Bayou Cleanup Volunteer Efforts	Volunteer bayou clean-ups with baseline and event measurement.
Resilience & Carbon Mitigation	Nature program addressing flood control, carbon mitigation, biodiversity, and species conservation with carbon removal equivalent to World Cup impact.
Environmental Justice Microgrant	Microgrants for community sustainability initiatives linked to the World Cup.

Water Quality – Clean Ups

- Co-facilitate with local non-profit organizations six clean up events for local bayous during the lead up to the World Cup that establish baseline and impact measurements as well as community education and mitigation:
 - 2 events during 3 months prior (baseline data)
 - 3 events during the World Cup (public awareness) -Jun 11, 2026 to Jul 19, 2026
 - 1 event 1 month post-event (post-event data)

Air Quality Summit

- September 24, 9:00 AM to 4:00 PM
- Venue: Cullen Auditorium, Baylor College of Medicine
- Food & Beverage (coffee bar, buffet lunch, and afternoon snack)
- Next Steps:
 - Speaker Recruitment
 - Outreach & Engagement
- Agenda:
 - 9:00 AM – Registration & Continental Breakfast
 - 9:30 AM – Welcome Remarks & Houston 2026 Sustainability Overview
 - Morning Keynotes – State of Air Quality & Public Health Impacts
 - Lunch – Networking, Lunch Buffet, Exhibits
 - Afternoon Breakouts –
 - Public Sector Strategies
 - AQ & Public Health
 - Industry & Business Innovations
 - AQ Mitigation and Co-Benefits
 - Community Action
 - Youth Engagement
 - Monitoring network Presentation & Q&A
 - Closing Reflections & Next Steps

K-12 + Youth Air Quality Summit

K-12 Menu for World Cup Sustainability Projects: Students Making Houston Green

Children's Environmental Literacy Foundation (CLF) • 3d

K-12 Menu for World Cup Student Action Projects

Engaging K-12 activities exploring sustainability initiatives for the 2026 Houston World Cup

Green Infrastructure & Nature-Based Solutions

Urban Tree Canopy Expansion

Description: Organize tree-planting events to improve air quality, provide shade, and combat heat islands for campuses.

Sponsorship: \$1,000-\$2,000
Corporate Volunteers: 40-60
Total Hours: 20-40 hours
Local Partners(s):

- [Trees for Houston](#)
- [TreeFolks](#)
- [Houston Urban Forestry Program](#)
- [Texas A&M AgriLife Extension](#)
- [Green Building Resource Center](#)

Pollinator Habitat / Pocket Prairie

Description: Create a pollinator habitat and/or pocket prairie on school campuses or remediating corporate gardens. Restoring

Waste Reduction & Circular Economy

Zero Waste Campus

Description: Transform campus environments into sustainability leaders with the Zero Waste Program. This comprehensive initiative reduces landfill waste through strategic bin placement, educational workshops, and student-led recycling campaigns. Utilize a Southeast Texas-specific [Zero-Waste Action Toolkit](#) for local partners, programs, and field trip learning experiences.

Sponsorship: \$0
Corporate Volunteers: 20-30
Total Hours: 120 hours
Local Partners(s):

- [Children's Environmental Literacy Foundation \(CLF\)](#)

Lunchroom Share Table Programs

Description: Establish a system for collecting and donating unopened

Water & Climate Resilience

Resilient Schools and Communities (RISC) Campaign

Description: Educate youth and schools about climate science and environmental justice. Complete a climate vulnerability assessment and listen to your community to identify natural solutions.

Sponsorship: \$1,000-\$5,000
Corporate Volunteers: 25 - 75
Total Hours: 200+ hours
Local Partners(s):

- [NWF EcoSchools](#)
- [U.S. Resilient Schools and Communities \(RISC\) Campaign](#)

School-Based Water Smart Solutions

Description: Install hydration stations to encourage reusable water bottles and track usage. Implement rainwater harvesting systems—such as barrels or cisterns—to support irrigation

Sustainable Mobility & Clean Energy

Student-Led Air Quality Monitoring & Summit

Description: Invest in local air quality student projects and take the annual Air Quality Summit, where students present their data, collaborate with industry experts, and advocate for long-term policy solutions to improve air quality in the region.

Sponsorship: \$3,500-\$6,000
Corporate Volunteers: 6-8
Total Hours: hours
Local Partners(s):

- [HARC](#)
- [HGAC](#)
- [Children's Environmental Literacy Foundation \(CLF\)](#)

Solar Energy Pilot Projects

Description: Implement small-scale solar panel systems on school rooftops to promote renewable energy and reduce energy costs. Engage students in

Community Engagement & Storytelling

Green Marketing & Public Awareness Campaign

Description: Design promotional materials (posters, social media graphics, video ads) to be used on social media to support sustainability initiatives.

Sponsorship: \$100-\$300
Corporate Volunteers: 3 - 5 (speakers & draft evaluators)
Total Hours: 20 hours
Local Partner:


- [Climate Communications Collective](#)

Days of Service Campaign

Description: Activate your school community for acts of service. Complete at least three days of service to support your school, as well as your local community and wildlife.

Sponsorship: \$100-\$500
Corporate Volunteers: 10 - 15
Total Hours: 100+ hours

Call To Action



Click, commit, change:
[Sign up now to champion student-led sustainability projects.](#)

Children's Environmental Literacy Foundation

2025 Inaugural Air Quality Summit

Advancing 2026 Houston World Cup Sustainability initiatives through collaborative air quality improvements.

The inaugural Air Quality Summit brings together educators, students, industry leaders, and community advocates to collaborate on air quality solutions and showcase student-led projects that drive meaningful impact across our region.



Port Houston

SUMMIT HIGHLIGHTS

- Student-led air quality event
- Industry-education partnerships
- Clean air workforce development
- Long-term community engagement



Thanks to our generous supporters who help to make our Air Quality Summit possible.

[FIRST RESERVE](#) [FLUOR](#) [TC Energy](#) [Baker Hughes](#)

Sustainable Soccer Fields

- Technical guidelines for design addressing water, soil, flood and heat mitigation, waste, energy, and related topics
- Next steps:
 - Toolkit: finalize content, review, design, publish
 - Implementation: identify Grow the Game synergies or field improvement opportunities and resources locally



Sustainable Event Management System

Constructing a Legacy Playbook

- **OBJECTIVE:**

- Seamlessly **integrate sustainability into facets of event planning and execution**. With a keen focus on social, economic, and environmental impacts, for events that aspire to leave a lasting positive legacy. Our Legacy is applicable to **events of all types and sizes**.

- **SHORT TERM NEEDS: Target Draft System by End of April 25'**

- **System Drafters** | Draft the language and component structure of the system | 2-3 people
- **System Reviewers** | Review the language and components by sharing feedback based on expertise and practicality of use | 2-3 people

- **ONGOING NEEDS:**

- **System Tools** | Create practical content such as assessments, brochures, checklists, best practices, stakeholder lists, metrics, surveys, etc.. | Action Tracker

Hospitality Toolkits

- Core content:
 - Packaging, organics and food waste reduction, recycling
 - Energy
 - Transport
 - Nature
 - Certifications
- Compiling “messy” content
- Reviewers needed
- Launch target: June 2025

Medium Effort: Recycling for Leased Properties & Private Recycling Services

Work with Building Management for Recycling Services

Why Do This?

Many leased properties **lack dedicated recycling services**, but businesses can **advocate for improved waste management in their building**.

Steps to Implement:

1. **Contact Building Management** to inquire about **existing recycling contracts**.
2. **Request Recycling Services** if they are not already included in the lease agreement.
3. **Collaborate with Neighboring Businesses** to increase demand for **shared recycling programs**, potentially lowering costs.
4. Understand what is collected by the waste vendor.
5. **Place Clear Signage** for recycling stations to ensure compliance with guidelines.
6. **Provide Clearly Marked Bins** in staff and customer areas to separate waste streams.
7. **Train Staff & Guests** to properly sort recyclables and where to segregate materials in the building.

Economic Considerations:

- **Minimal cost** for bins and signage.
- **Possible cost savings** for building owner if **landfill fees decrease** through better waste management agreements.

Green Corridor

 Corridor from NRG Stadium to Downtown & EaDo as a model of sustainable infrastructure, showcasing the best of Houston, and leveraging the 2026 World Cup to create lasting environmental and social benefits.

Objectives:

- Connect key venues with accessible routes
- Showcase resilient infrastructure
- Mitigate urban heat islands & promote biodiversity
- Elevate public art, education, & community engagement
- Foster sustainable tourism & business participation
- Tell Houston's story!
- Help ensure a safe and positive experience for visitors

Focus Areas & Outputs:

- Green Corridor Development: Define routes, sustainability site criteria, Green Badge program
- Resilient & Sustainable Infrastructure: Waste & circularity, last-mile energy innovation, native planning and heat mitigation
- Public Art & Education: SDG murals, QR-coded signs, local engagement
- Connectivity: Metro Red Line, Columbia Tap Trail, bike/pedestrian paths
- Sustainable Tourism: Events map, FIFA app integration, replicable model for events

Specific Opportunities to Contribute

- Commit to develop/ adapt tools, be a reviewer, pilot, or adopt the Sustainable Event Management System
- Contribute to (develop, review, pilot) the hospitality toolkits
- Participate in or promote the air quality summit, suggest panelists or actions
- Connect resources and opportunities in the K-12 program
- Contribute expertise to sustainable soccer field guidelines
- Organize a bayou clean up or volunteer effort
- Help identify “sustainability sites,” contribute GIS data or expertise
- Contribute to communications / culture work or commit to spreading the messages

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