



# GREEN EVENTS GUIDE

VICTORIA CONFERENCE CENTRE

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The Victoria Conference Centre is located  
on the traditional, unceded territories of  
**the Songhees Nation, the Esquimalt Nation**  
**and the Lekwungen speaking peoples.**

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# Low-Impact Events at the VCC

## CARBON NEUTRAL

All venue emissions including energy, water, waste and stationery are offset.

## BOMA PLATINUM

The VCC operates to the platinum level of BOMA's Building Environmental standard

## ENERGY & WATER

Per delegate, the VCC has reduced electricity use by 47% and water use by 55%

## PRO TIPS FOR GREEN EVENTS

### COMMUNICATIONS & MARKETING

- Go Digital
- Share Goals & Results
- Provide green guidance

### PROCUREMENT

- Minimize Swag
- Buy Green
- Support Local
- Support Indigenous
- Plant-Rich Catering

### TRANSPORTATION & ACCOMODATION

- Stay Local
- Stay Green
- Prioritize Walking, Biking, and Busing
- Book Zero-Emission Coaches or Offset

### ON-SITE OPERATIONS

- Go Zero Waste
- Water Station
- Work with Exhibitors

### GO CARBON NEUTRAL!

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# COMMUNICATIONS & MARKETING

## GO DIGITAL

Use an app or mobile friendly web platform. Apps can be completely customized, and some are even available free.

- ✓ Save printing & shipping costs (instant changes to content and no costly re-prints!)
- ✓ Generate revenue from sponsor promotions
- ✓ Interactive session tools may include polling, Q&A, and word clouds
- ✓ Collect instant feedback on sessions
- ✓ Platform for attendees to network
- ✓ Profile speakers
- ✓ Message all attendees with updates during event

## SHARE GOALS & RESULTS

Communicate your sustainability goals to your venue, accommodation providers, caterers, suppliers, and attendees.

## PROVIDE GREEN GUIDANCE

Engage all parties to radiate positive impact. Invite vendors, exhibitors, attendees and more to engage in responsible practices and provide guidance where appropriate.

- Include green practices in vendor agreements (only compostable food packaging, no bottled water, limit swag, responsible for own signage waste)
- Include green practices in attendee communications (promote green accommodation and transportation options, highlight local businesses)

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A green event can help attract sponsors, funders, presenters, and participants.

## PRO TIPS

## SAMPLE GOALS

1. **Tree Free** - Go digital and when needed use 100% Post Consumer Recycled Content paper for printing
2. **App Sponsor** - Provide exclusive sponsorship of the app as a sponsor benefit

# PROCUREMENT

## MINIMIZE SWAG

Prioritize gifts that are useful and responsibly sourced.

### FAIRWARE

## BUY GREEN

Select products that follow these green principles:

- ✓ High in recycled content
- ✓ Compostable & Recyclable
- ✓ Reusable
- ✓ Locally Sourced
- ✓ Green Certified
- ✓ Fair Trade

### Vancouver Island Green Business Collective

## SUPPORT LOCAL

Locally owned, independent businesses create vibrant communities. Think Local First businesses are at least 51% independently owned on Vancouver Island and fiercely committed to each other and Victoria.

### Think Local First

## SUPPORT INDIGENOUS

### GVHA Indigenous Business Directory

## PLANT-RICH CATERING

Ask the Fairmont Empress about highlighting locally sourced vegetables and choose low-carbon proteins such as poultry, seafood, and legumes.

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What we buy plays a huge role in our impact on the environment. Consider if the items are necessary and whether they can be reused or recycled at the end of their life.

## PRO TIPS

- Develop responsible purchasing guidelines
- Print signs without dates so they can be reused year after year

## SAMPLE GOALS

1. Go Tree Free
2. Source responsible Swag and Gifts (1-2 item max per person)
3. All suppliers to be local, green, or Indigenous
4. Menu includes mostly plants and only low-carbon proteins (poultry, seafood, and legumes)

# TRANSPORTATION & ACCOMODATION

## STAY LOCAL

Select and promote responsible accommodation partners (Carbon Neutral, 5 Green Keys, EV Charging Onsite, Bike/Scooter Rentals, Proximity)

- [Destination Greater Victoria Accommodations](#)
- [Green Key Global Members](#)

## STAY GREEN

Choose green accommodation partners that put sustainability at the forefront of their operations like these carbon neutral and 5 Green Key rated hotels.

- [Inn at Laurel Point](#) (CN, GK5, Bike, EV Charging, 1.1 km)
- [The Parkside Hotel & Spa](#) (CN, GK5, Bike, EV Charging, 0.4 km)

## PRIORITIZE WALKING, BIKING AND BUSING

By encouraging guests and staff to travel sustainably, you can dramatically reduce your carbon emissions.

- Display signage to direct visitors to bike parking and nearby bus stations
- Display nearby transit service routes and scheduled services

## BOOK ZERO-EMISSION COACHES OR OFFSET

- Choose electric coaches for group transportation ([PNWTS](#))
- Choose electric taxis ([Current Taxi](#))

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Did you know coach buses use 76% fewer emissions than travelling by car, and air travel can account for more than 80% of the carbon footprint of a conference? By encouraging your attendees, speakers, volunteers, and staff to travel sustainably, you can dramatically reduce your carbon emissions.

## PRO TIPS

- Promote key transit, cycling and walking routes to your venue and accommodations
- Track and collect data on all travel associated with your event including flights and ferry rides.

## SAMPLE GOALS

1. Offset all travel emissions
2. 50% low-emissions transportation
3. 100% carbon neutral accommodations

# ON-SITE OPERATIONS

## GO ZERO WASTE

A zero-waste event reduces waste and diverts recyclable and compostable materials from going into landfills

- Set a zero-waste goal and share with partners and attendees
- Order [Terracycle](#) boxes
- Display appropriate waste sorting signage.
- Encourage vendors to buy in bulk and source compostable/recyclable/reusable products.
- Calculate your waste diversion rate and communicate your results!

[Project Zero Waste Audit Tools](#)

## WATER STATION

- Request water refill station, consider having reusable water bottles for purchase
- Display appropriate signage to direct visitors to water stations.

## WORK WITH EXHIBITORS

- Include green initiatives in agreements (share clear goals and set expectations)
- Arrange zero-waste stations near vendors with volunteers to assist with sorting.

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The key to low-impact event operations is planning ahead. Once your event is up and running, there is little time to think about recycling bins. Connect with your VCC event manager to develop your green event plan.

## PRO TIPS

- Develop a zero-waste plan and consider how to eliminate or divert all waste from landfill
- Update vendor agreements to include participation in green initiatives such as compostable packaging, going zero-waste, etc.

## SAMPLE GOALS

1. Zero Waste (90% diversion rate)
2. No single use bottled water on-site
3. No bottled water
4. 100% of vendors/exhibitors agree to low-impact practices

# GO CARBON NEUTRAL!

## MEASURE

Track all transportation emissions associated with your event including flights, buses, taxis and shuttles.

Engage the services of [Synergy Enterprises](#) to measure your emissions and help you choose an offset provider.

## REDUCE

Remember! Coaches use 76% fewer emissions than travelling by car.

Minimize transportation emissions by encouraging coach travel, car-pooling, and offering digital attendance.

- Book zero-emission coaches and taxis for transportation needs
- Encourage guests to travel by coach or car-pool
- Offer digital attendance

## OFFSET

Support a project that aligns with the mission of your organization.

Depending on the offset cost and flight distance, costs could range between \$5 and \$30 per attendee (based on offset cost of \$20 per tonne).

- Add an eco-fee to your event cost to cover flight offsets
- Create a "Carbon Neutral Sponsor" option to cover offset costs

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The Victoria Conference Centre offsets all emissions associated with the venue. To host a carbon neutral event, simply measure and offset your transportation emissions

## PRO TIPS

- Choose only zero-emission coaches and taxis to eliminate the need to track and offset ground transportation
- Identify what data you will need to track and how you will collect it

## SAMPLE GOALS

1. 100% Carbon Neutral
2. Offset all flight emissions

# CHECKLIST FOR EVENT PLANNERS

## COMMUNICATIONS & MARKETING

- Set and communicate your sustainability goals to your team, venue, accommodation providers, caterers, suppliers, and attendees
- Use an app or mobile friendly web platform for digital dissemination including agendas, schedules, and worksheets
- Invite vendors, exhibitors, attendees and more to engage in responsible practices and provide guidance where appropriate

## TRANSPORTATION & ACCOMMODATION

- Track and collect data on all travel associated with your event, including flights and ferry rides
- Select and promote green accommodation partners
- Promote key transit, cycling and walking routes to your venue and accommodations
- Book zero-emission coaches or taxis for group transportation
- Minimize transportation emissions by encouraging coach travel, car-pooling, and offering digital attendance

## PROCUREMENT

- Prioritize gifts that are useful and responsibly sourced
- Support locally owned and green businesses
- Support Indigenous businesses
- Request a plant-rich menu highlighting locally sourced vegetables and low-carbon proteins

## ON-SITE OPERATIONS

- Develop a zero-waste plan
- Update vendor agreements to include participation in green initiatives such as compostable packaging, going zero waste, etc.
- Calculate your waste diversion rate and communicate your results

## GO CARBON NEUTRAL!

- Track all transportation emissions associated with your event
- Support a carbon offset project that aligns with the mission of your organization

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