

START A SHOP LOCAL OR GREEN BUSINESS CAMPAIGN

City of St. Louis Sustainable Neighborhood Initiative



Local Farm to Family Program - Photo by Farm to Family

DESCRIPTION

A shop local campaign is an advertising campaign and/or fund-raising effort to highlight the benefits of shopping at locally owned and operated businesses and increase patronage at those businesses. A green business campaign gets more businesses to participate in sustainable business practices and get their customers to support them in those efforts. Supporting local and green businesses increases community economic health, social solidarity, and benefits the environment too. Buy local campaigns are often pioneered by a local business association and benefit businesses and residents.

NEIGHBORHOOD BENEFITS

Environmental

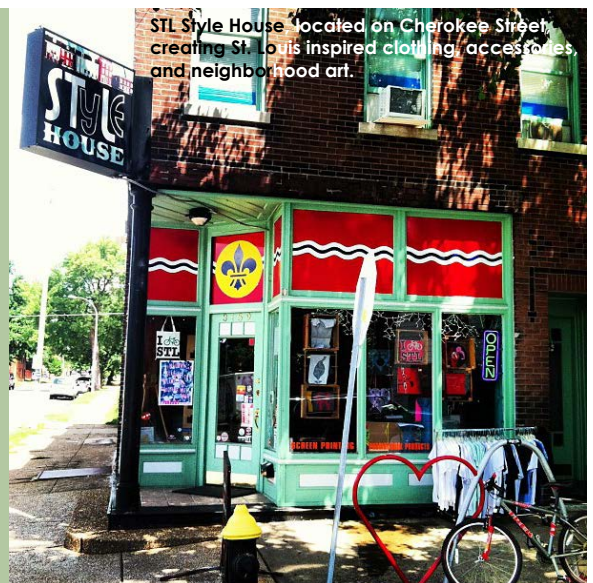
- Reduced impact from transportation costs
- Reduced greenhouse gas emissions via walking and cycling campaigns
- Greener businesses support recycling, energy use reduction, greening, and water conservation

Social

- Local community investment, prosperity, and positive growth
- Improved relationships between local residents and business owners
- Supports fresh and healthy eating, improved public health and well being from buying local food

Economic

- Money kept within local revenue streams
- Local business prosperity
- Invested community members make a stronger and more stable community less susceptible to market fluctuations



STL Style House, located on Cherokee Street, creating St. Louis inspired clothing, accessories, and neighborhood art.



Local Loop Shopping Promotion

RELATED TOOLS

When paired with other tools, buy local and green business campaigns can contribute to a greater and more holistic, sustainable neighborhood. Think about community cohesion, local economic prosperity, job and food security, and healthy vibrant communities. Try combining a shop local or green business campaign with:

- Foster Activity with Public Seating, Programs, and Furniture
- Establish a Community Garden or Local Food Installation

EXAMPLES

St. Louis Green Business Challenge, St. Louis, MO

The St. Louis Regional Chamber assists companies in adopting sustainable business practices.

Buy Local Santa Monica, Santa Monica, CA

Created by the Santa Monica business community to raise awareness.

Love Asheville Go Local/Asheville Grown Buy Local, Asheville, NC

Asheville Grown Business Alliance campaign.



South Grand Business District

GET STARTED

1. **Organize** Form a steering committee of 6 - 15 people, mostly local business owners, a few interested individuals, and any neighborhood leaders or leaders of relevant organizations.
2. **Kickoff** Set a date for a kick-off event such as a press conference to announce the campaign or an event to sell/give away campaign material. This gives immediate media visibility and helps with your initial recruitment drive. You can also hold a gathering for business owners, perhaps at a local restaurant or performance venue. You can also invite **AMIBA** or **BALLE** to visit your community and lead a workshop.
3. **Brand** Devise a name, slogan, and logo. Consider asking local designers to volunteer their services in exchange for free membership. Many examples of slogans and logos can be found online, but it is best to be creative and highlight the things that are unique about your community.
4. **Campaign** Develop a campaign kit. This is the packet of materials that businesses receive when they join. It might include a welcome letter, a window decal of the campaign logo for their storefront, tips for promoting the campaign, a "Top 10 Reasons to Support Locally Owned Businesses" flyer for distributing to customers, frequently asked questions about the campaign, a list of participating businesses, and a poster. You should also create a basic web site. (Again, consider asking local print shops and web developers to volunteer their services in exchange for free membership.) There are various types of campaigns including the traditional one defined above. Other creative ideas are:
 - Have residents pledge to spend \$10 a week on local food
 - Offer discounts or benefits for local residents
 - Offer discounts/benefits for people that walk or ride bikes
 - Create a business recycling challenge
 - Create a local product or shop guide
 - Neighborhood groups advertising local business with a mailer/map/flyer
 - Encourage bike delivery/courier service
 - Local food/farmers market/restaurant partnership program
 - Host a buy local day or week-long event
5. **Define Membership** Define membership and determine which businesses are eligible to participate in the campaign. Contact AMIBA for examples of how other buy local efforts define "locally owned" and "independent." Decide how much it will cost businesses to join. Some alliances start out with fairly substantial dues rates. Others opt for a modest initial membership fee (\$20-30)—just enough to cover the cost of producing start-up materials and organizing their first events—and raise it in subsequent years as the campaign expands and gains influence.
6. **Advertise** Hold your kick-off event in a significant place, such as a downtown square or in front of a landmark local business. Send out a media advisory a couple of days ahead and a press release the day before. A few committee members should speak briefly at the event about the importance of local businesses and the goals of the campaign. Another option is to host an informal breakfast or cocktail hour gathering to introduce the campaign to business owners. A cash-mob could be organized in which participants patronize a specific local business to highlight their important role in the community and give them a boost in sales for the day.
7. **Recruit** Begin recruiting members. You might start by sending out a letter, signed by one or more prominent members of your steering committee, inviting businesses to join the campaign. Check with your St. Louis Regional Council for local business contact information.
8. **Grow** Continue to grow your membership and campaign. Hold events to boost awareness and appreciate your members and patrons. Develop a more extensive presence and website and work toward taking on more complex projects within the district and the city.



Morganford Special Business District Branding - Photo by Marjorie Kennedy

RELATED SUSTAINABILITY PLAN CATEGORIES

This tool supports the following goals and strategies:

Urban Character, Vitality & Ecology

Strategies B7-Encourage communities to improve their own neighborhood; J5-Increase the effectiveness of major commercial corridors; J8-Incorporate sustainability in economic development programs

Health, Well-Being & Safety

Strategies: C5-Make farmers markets and other local food access systems readily available to everyone

Prosperity, Opportunity & Employment

Strategies: C3-Focus on small businesses as a key part of the City and global economy; H5-Help social programs to attract sustainable funding sources.

For the most current examples, updated tools, and information, visit the City's Sustainable Neighborhood Initiative website:

SUSTAINABLENEIGHBORHOOD.NET