

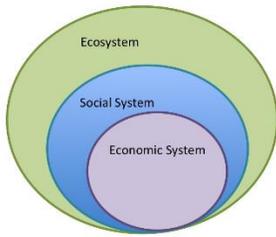


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# What Is Sustainability?



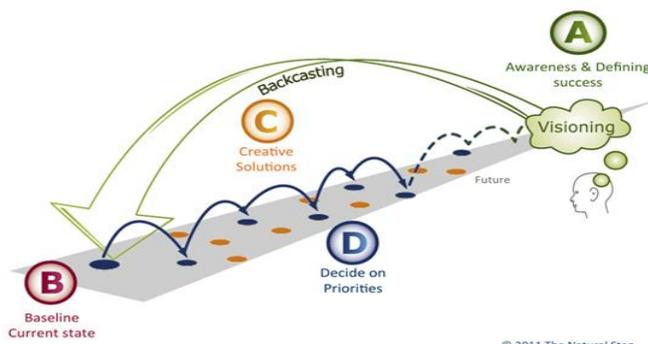
Increasing concerns about the wellbeing of our environment and its effect on people and the economy have highlighted the need for Sustainability on a global scale. Recognizing that our planet cannot support a “business as usual” model, governments, organizations, and individuals are increasingly turning to sustainable practices that support the **Triple Bottom Line** – the people, the planet and the economy. Sustainability is defined as, “meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.” To accomplish this, the focus is put

on the Triple Bottom Line where we see the interdependent relationship between our economic, social, and environmental systems. Businesses that incorporate sustainable practices are discovering they can maximize their economic strength while providing social equity and supporting the health of our environment. The plan we have prepared for the Hilton Garden Inn will outline the Natural Step, a framework tool used for informed decision making, and showcase three main goals and down to action steps that will help your hotel begin the change towards becoming a sustainable business.

## The Natural Step

ABCD (and E) Planning Process

To create a sustainable society, we need both a vision of where we want to be and a plan for getting there. Achieving this is done by implementing the Framework for Strategic Sustainable Development and the Natural Step Process. These tools allow us to take a systematic approach to creating strategies that promote economic prosperity in balance with the health of our environment and our global community.



This planning process, developed by the Natural Step, is the guide we used to create a map for a more sustainable future for your hotel. Using a backcasting method – beginning with the end in mind -- this process helps build a strategic sustainability plan that is realistic, logical, and flexible. Most importantly, it promotes the continuous evaluation of your successes as you move towards creating a more sustainable Hilton Garden Inn.

## Step A: Awareness

A sustainable future starts by evaluating and building awareness of the relevance of sustainability to the Hilton Garden Inn. From there you can develop a common language and understanding around sustainability across all associate levels and in all job classifications. At this step we crafted ambitious goals for the Hilton Garden Inn that are designed to bring about radical changes in how your business operates in support of the Triple Bottom Line. Once you begin your efforts towards a more sustainable future, having a collective understanding of what sustainability means for the Hilton Garden Inn will be critical to your success.

## Step B: Baseline Analysis

To understand the current situation of the Hilton Garden Inn we participated in a mock check-in process as a class and scrutinized the hotel to create an inventory of sustainability strengths and challenges. After collecting on-site observations, we held interviews with management and department heads to explore their perspectives on sustainability and gather insight on what we observed. These observations and interviews became our baseline analysis and gave us an overall view of where you stand at this moment and the assets that you can build from in your sustainability initiative.

## Step C: Compelling Vision

Having a snapshot of your current situation with regards to sustainability and knowing what you would like to see from yourselves as a sustainably-minded hotel, we crafted a proposed vision for the Hilton Garden Inn and created long-term strategic goals to help guide you towards that vision. **Backcasting** is a principle that promotes starting with your vision of a sustainable future – where you want to be -- to create plans and policies based on where you are, that will realistically help reach your goal. This is different than **Forecasting** which divines the outcome future goals based on the assumption that current trends will remain in an upward trajectory.

## Step D: Down to Action

After establishing a set of long-term goals, we brainstormed potential solutions to bring you closer to your vision. Here we crafted short-, mid-, and long-term Down to Action steps. Short-term steps (or goals) are fairly easy, “quick wins” that may take between a couple of weeks to a few months to reach. Mid-term goals require a bit more planning and may take anywhere from a few months to a couple of years to meet. The long-term action steps for each strategic goal are the ones that will require significant planning to accomplish. Backcasting is used to determine if the Down to Action steps are in keeping with the vision of sustainability for the Hilton Garden Inn.

## Step E: Evaluating Progress

This planning process is a journey that requires the revisiting of these steps many times on the way to becoming a more sustainable-minded organization. The flexibility in this plan comes at this step where you evaluate what you have accomplished to ensure it is in keeping with your long-term strategic goals and vision. Here, you celebrate your successes and most importantly, rework the steps that do not support your goals on your way to a sustainable Hilton Garden Inn

# Baseline Observations

## Key Sustainability Strengths

These are the strengths and assets were observed during our mock check-in and interviews with staff members. It is important to recognize that the Hilton Garden Inn in South Bend is already implementing many great ideas and practices, and the interviewed staff have excellent initiative towards what would make the hotel a more sustainable business.

### People

- Excellent hospitably and service during mock check-in and interviews
- Results from guest feedback identifies Staff as top three strengths
- Front desk staff has minimal turnover
- Upper management creates a positive work environment, according to mid-level managers
- Management invests time in volunteer efforts
- Extensive education opportunities through Hilton Worldwide University
- Newly installed security system
- The use of natural lighting in the lobby, restaurant, and Gillespie Center is excellent and provides an inviting atmosphere
- Participating in the Clean the World program

### Planet

- Bathrooms currently utilizing low flow toilets to conserve water
- LED lighting is phasing out older light bulbs
- Use of low-energy exit signs
- Plan in place for 2019 to replace parking lot High Intensity Discharge lighting with energy efficient LED lights
- Plans in place to seal windows to reduce heat loss
- Guest linen-reuse program
- Plan in place to replace inefficient industrial washer/dryer
- Currently using High Efficiency gel laundry soap for linens
- Reusable key cards
- Paper recycling available in the office
- Locally sourced food items are being used in restaurant and catering
- Cloth napkins used in Bistro 933
- Towel use in fitness room
- Use of Hilton Honors App for room access
- Use of thermal shades in rooms
- Use of paper cups instead of Styrofoam

## Economy

- Leadership has the desire and motivation to create a more sustainable business
- Efforts are being made to track utilities spending and reduce waste
- Conserve to Preserve card
- Use of local bottler for soda machine

## Key Sustainability Opportunities

These are areas that provide opportunities to improve on current sustainability practices. The process of working towards being a more sustainability-oriented business is a continuing goal. Addressing these areas will yield drastic improvements towards your efforts to become more sustainable.

## People

- High turnover rate in housekeeping which is costly on training and difficult on staff morale
- The need for and importance of sustainability is not communicated effectively across all associate levels. This creates hurdles in creating associate buy-in for implementing sustainability practices
- Living wage

## Planet

- Lack of guest recycling
- Excessive waste from catering events
- Printing guest report as a preventative for power outages wastes excessive amounts of paper
- Land use is not conducive to efficient water management and landscaping
- Non-native plants used in landscaping
- Use of toxic substances in pool, housekeeping, kitchen
- TV in conference center on at all times
- No plants in the conference center
- Guest washer and dryer are outdated and not High Efficiency
- Light in laundry room is always on
- Water fountain does not have a water bottle filler

## Economy

- Uninsulated emergency exit door in hallway leading to the conference center creates drastic change in temperature
- Bedroom linens made in China
- Excessive electrical and utility waste is putting additional financial strain on your budget and building

# Proposed Vision

In crafting our suggestion of what we thought the vision for a sustainable Hilton Garden Inn should be, we felt it important to keep Hilton's core philosophy at the center. We believe the quality hospitality and fantastic guest experience you offer will only be enhanced by incorporating the principles of sustainability into your business model. It is critical that the Hilton Garden Inn operate from a position of environmental consciousness, provides equity among staff, guests, and the community, and implement practices that will drive economic success without compromising our needs for the future.

*"Hilton Garden Inn strives to model Hilton's core Purpose as a 'Group of people deeply committed to making our world a better place through hospitality' by its commitment to practices that support and improve the local community, the environment and the economy."*

As you continue to work towards becoming a more sustainability-focused organization it is important to continuously weigh your goals and actions against your vision. With a clear understanding of where you want to be it will be easier to create realistic projects that move you there from where you are, instead of keeping you in an endless loop of only solving the problems of today.

# Goal I: Reduce Resource Consumption

Reduce the Hilton Garden Inn carbon footprint and its impact on the world by practicing conservation techniques through innovative technology, efficient products, and procedures, while enhancing the guest experience

## Down to Action Steps

### Short-Term

Current efforts to change incandescent lights are critical to reducing electric bills and wasting electricity in general. The savings created by switching will be significant, and all rooms and common areas should be changed over as quickly as possible to start seeing success. This would be an easy project to promote to guests.

- Change incandescent lights to quickly maximize the savings benefits from reduced electric usage
  - See Figure 1.

Large amounts of glass waste, in the form of beer bottles, is produced when hosting events at the Gillespie center. Having a recycling program for these glass bottles in place is crucial for reducing the impact of this waste and can be used as a starting point for a large-scale program. Down the road you may want to consider offering more local options or drinks on draft to reduce the amount of glass bottle waste produced.

- Implement recycling program for glass for event catering
  - Catering events offer a great way to showcase your new efforts

### Mid-Term

Install low-flow shower heads and faucets to help reduce wasted water and high water bills. With plans in place for guest room bath renovations on the horizon, replacing standard shower heads and faucets with ones that are environmentally friendly becomes a more reasonable endeavor. High-pressure low-flow items are available, so comfort is not sacrificed in the guest experience.

- Install low-flow shower heads and faucets in rooms and facilities
  - Upcoming renovation projects should take advantage of low-flow showerheads and faucets to reduce water waste
  - High pressure low-flow showerheads are available
  - See Figure 2.

Parking lot lights are running for hours on end throughout the year. Plans in place to replace these lights with efficient LED lights should absolutely be followed through with in 2019. Switching to LED lights will not only reduce energy bills but also reduce the cost of continual maintenance on replacements as well ensure the safety of the facilities staff responsible for maintaining the lights.

- Replace High Intensity Discharge parking lot lighting with low-energy alternative
  - See Figure 1.

## Long-Term

Motion sensor lighting should be installed in as many places as possible to cut down on electricity usage. This type of lighting could be utilized in many of the public areas to avoid having to keep lights on at all times. Sensors can be set up to allow for quick lighting before patrons enter those areas.

- Invest in motion sensor controls for lighting common areas
  - Hall to Gillespie Center
  - Restrooms
  - Fitness Room
  - Offices

To reduce the amount of waste that is going to landfills the Hilton Garden Inn needs to have a structured plan in place to deal with any waste that can be recycled. This program should extend to both staff and guests to the best of your ability and should be promoted as part of your sustainable efforts once it is in place.

- Implement a hotel-wide recycling program for staff and guests
  - Have recycling available in key areas of the building
    - Hallways near elevators
    - Main Lobby
    - Guest rooms if possible
    - Fitness room for water & sports drink bottles

# Goal II: Empower People

Enable a just and equitable society through advocacy, education, communication, and innovation that supports people living better and more sustainable lives and promotes sustainable tourism.

## Down to Action Steps

### Short-Term

Empowering people is critical to becoming a successful sustainable organization. Forming a committee or group that is dedicated to sustainability initiatives will be key to reaching that goal.

- A separate committee should exist from Bright Heart that focuses on sustainability initiatives
  - This committee would generate new sustainability ideas quarterly for the hotel
  - Associate up to Managers should be included to incorporate a wide array of ideas

Having a well-educated work force and fostering a sustainable-minded culture is vital to meeting your desired goals and vision. There is a wide range of activities that can be done to involve not only management but associates in the best practices for sustainability.

- Regularly scheduled educational events bring staff up to date on current sustainability projects, goals, and achievements
- Sustainability focused Peer-to-Peer mentoring programs allows current associates to help train new associates
- New associates should be trained on the hotels' vision of sustainability to foster their understanding and create a shared vision of how to meet your goals

Guests should be aware of your successes in regards to sustainability. We observed some current initiatives, but not all of them are obvious to a typical guest. Further marketing your sustainability efforts to your guests is invaluable in setting the Hilton Garden Inn apart from the competition.

- Better promote to guests your current sustainability initiatives
  - Make the linen reuse program information more prominent when entering the room
  - Partnership with Unity Gardens and other local vendors should not be limited to the menu but should also be advertised in the lobby and on the Bistro 933 website
  - Future goals and projects should be promoted to guests in the main lobby

## Mid-Term

Plant a community vegetable garden to provide fresh food and herbs for Bistro 933 and catering events. This garden could act as a beacon for associates to bond over, enjoy and participate in, and promote another unique way you are setting yourself apart from the competition.

- Implement a community garden for employees and guests to enjoy
  - Food can be used in Bistro 933 and for catering events to promote fresh, locally grown food
  - Area for staff to enjoy during breaks and participate in maintaining
  - There is potential to further partnership with Unity Gardens to expand knowledge and scope of this project

## Long-Term

Create and implement a training program for mid- and upper-level management to guide them in training associate level staff on the efforts and need for sustainability. Any new associate joining the hotel should understand why you are pursuing these sustainable efforts and be encouraged to bring new ideas to the table.

- Model an employee sustainability training program to potentially be used by Hilton Worldwide University

The Hilton Garden Inn currently utilizes some local art and locally sourced products for the kitchen. This is something that should be capitalized on for future endeavors. Any renovations to the hotel should include art from local artists and craftsmen. This becomes a platform to showcase your deep connection to the community.

- Encourage and promote the use of locally sourced products and services
  - Continue partnerships to buy food from local vendors
    - Unity Gardens
    - Farmers Market
  - Wall art and interior decorations should be incorporated that reflect the work of local craftsmen and artists
    - Consider a rotating “exhibit” that showcases local artist and gives guests an opportunity to purchase the work

# Goal III: Making Sustainable Investments

Invest in projects and materials that provide long term support and solutions for current sustainability challenges

## Down to Action Steps

### Short-Term

Printing the Guest Report every few hours creates excessive paper waste, despite double-sided printing practices. There are many electronic options for viewing these reports. Information could be stored digitally on a laptop, tablet, cloud device, or even backed up with battery backup equipment. We think this would be a key area to reduce paper waste and internal expenses. The return on investment could pay for itself in a year or two based on the savings in paper alone.

- Invest in battery backup (UPS) for server & printer for access to records when power is out
  - Info on identifying a backup that meets your needs: <https://www.howtogeek.com/161479/how-to-select-a-battery-backup-for-your-computer/>
- Digitizing records may give you the ability to avoid printing a report altogether by accessing it from a cloud device, laptop, or tablet
  - Flash drive & laptop
  - iPad or other device, saved to Cloud - AirPrint
- Yielding a savings difference at any cost for digitization less than this
  - Savings beyond cost of digitization would come at rate of \$108.33/per month
  - See Figure 3 for return on investment

### Mid-Term

Investing in energy efficient washer and dryer units for associate and public use is critical to cutting down on water usage. We understand that there are plans in place to replace the industrial equipment, but we believe this should extend to your guest laundry as well as those units are old and inefficient.

- Invest in High Efficiency washer and dryer units for associate and guest use
  - Hilton Los Angeles Universal City invested in *Hydrofiniti* washers
    - Use 76% less water in their laundry
    - Annual conservation of over 2 million gallons of water
      - 138 hotel-sized pools worth of water is conserved annually

## Long-Term

The Hilton Garden Inn's plan for a soft redesign and room remodel within the next year is an ideal opportunity to incorporate the use of sustainable products from sustainable supply chains such as Interface carpet. This is a way to display the Hilton Garden Inn's awareness and activism towards being a sustainable hotel and will also provide long-term savings.

- Replace carpet with carpet squares
  - Estimated renovation cost \$5.00 per sq. Foot
  - Replaced carpet will be recycled instead of going to landfills
  - Carpet parts are created from recycled materials including old pop bottles
  - Carpet has a life of 10+ years and has a modular construction
    - Replace single tiles when worn out or damaged
    - Can create unique patterns and designs
    - Styles for a high-end luxury look

### ROI

*Replacing Hilton Garden Inn's current carpet with Interface carpet will divert all carpet waste from the landfill because Interface will recycle the replaced carpet. Installation waste is also reduced to as low as 1.5% compared to installation waste of rolled carpet at 14%. Interface carpet tiles allow for replacing single tiles in the event of damage instead of replacing the entire carpet which provides economic savings.*

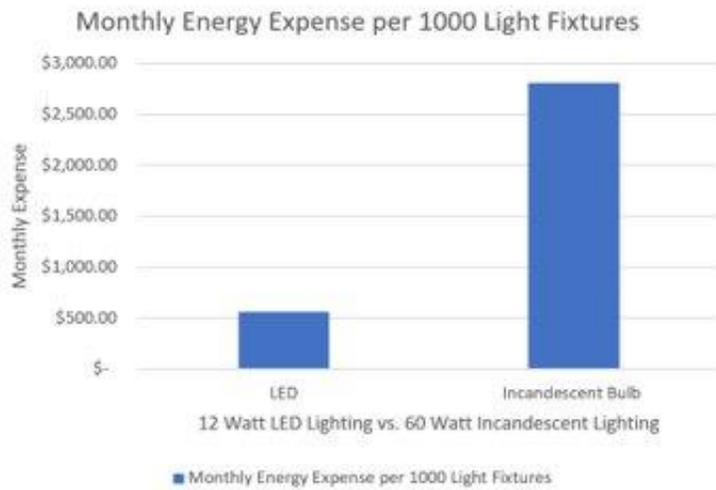
# Closing Thoughts

Nearly a thousand hotel rooms have been added to the area in the last two years, with the possibility of more on the way. All of these are in direct competition with the Hilton Garden Inn. Promoting your hotel as a beacon of sustainability gives you an edge on this competition. Once you have completed some of your short term down to action steps, we feel it is important that you make the best effort possible to promote all your sustainability projects in your hotel and on your website and social media platforms.

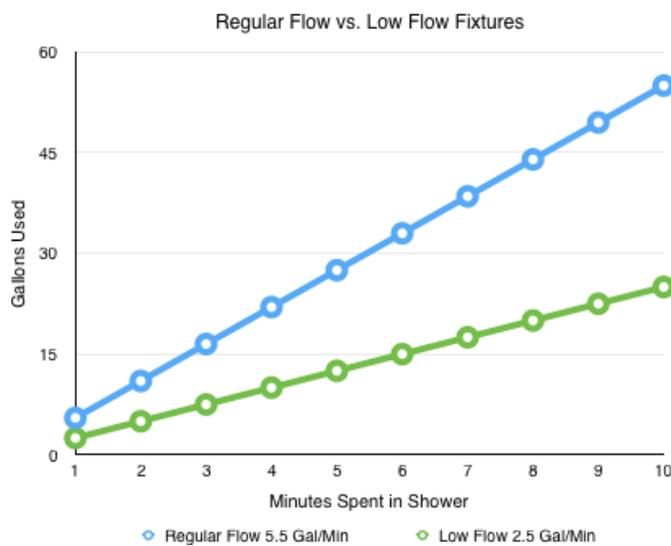
The plan we have presented represents a small cross section of activities that the Hilton Garden Inn can do to create a more successful sustainable business model. The goals and actions chosen reflect the areas that hotel staff expressed were areas for growth and improvement. We hope the information provided inspires you to create your own goals and action steps to meet your vision for the future. Every step taken towards being more sustainable has an impact on our community, the environment, and the economy and we are confident that your guests will appreciate the efforts you are making.

We are confident that you will be successful in your initiatives and we look forward to seeing what your wonderful staff can accomplish. While we continue to refine our education at Indiana University South Bend, we are more than willing to continue to offer suggestions and guidance for your future projects.

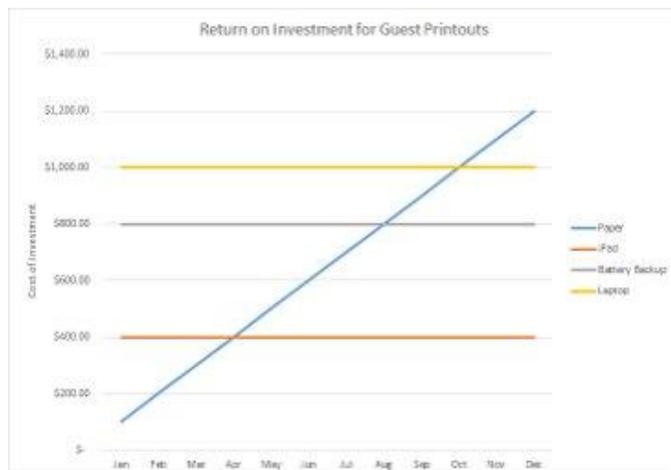
# Graphs and Tables



**Figure 1.** In a monthly analysis of 1000 light fixtures using 12-Watt LED bulbs over conventional 60-Watt Incandescent bulbs a savings of \$2140 can be saved at a rate of .13 cents per Kilowatt hour.



**Figure 2.** In a ten-minute shower a low flow shower head will conserve 30 gallons of water. This reduction in water use will translate to lower energy costs and less waste water usage.



**Figure 3.** This chart explores the continuous expense of paper over one calendar year compared to the initial costs of some electronic device that can provide alternatives to continuously printing guest reports.

# Contact Information

Indiana University South Bend – Strategic Sustainability Leadership Graduate Certificate Program

**Instructor:** Krista Bailey – [kob@iu.edu](mailto:kob@iu.edu)  
Catherine Brouillette – [brouillc@iu.edu](mailto:brouillc@iu.edu)  
Anthony Bush – [awbush@iu.edu](mailto:awbush@iu.edu)  
Jake Crawford – [jc66@iu.edu](mailto:jc66@iu.edu)  
Angelica Healy - [ahealy@iu.edu](mailto:ahealy@iu.edu)  
Celeste Ross - [mcr1@iu.edu](mailto:mcr1@iu.edu)  
Jeremiah Sult – [jjsult@iu.edu](mailto:jjsult@iu.edu)

Related Contact:

Center for a Sustainable Future  
574.520.4429 [csfuture@iusb.edu](mailto:csfuture@iusb.edu)  
[sustainthefuture.iusb.edu](http://sustainthefuture.iusb.edu)

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