



IMPRESSIVE SUSTAINABLE PRACTICES – FROM COMPLEX GEOTHERMAL HEATING SYSTEMS TO SIMPLE RECYCLED BOTTLES FOR BOUQUETS – HELP ELEVATE THE INDUSTRY.

BY JEANINE MATLOW



PHOTOS: COBO CENTER; GRAND TRAVERSE RESORT AND SPA; CRYSTAL MOUNTAIN; BAVARIAN INN; FREDERIK MEIJER GARDENS & SCULPTURE PARK



The introduction of Zagster, a bike-share program with stations around downtown Port Huron, makes it easy for meeting and event attendees to get to and from the Blue Water Convention Center.



CUTTING-EDGE WORK

In the Motor City, Claude Molinari, general manager of the SMG-managed Cobo Center, says they're doing a lot more training with staff and prospective clients. In September, for example, they hosted the Events Industry Council's training for the Sustainable Event Professional Certificate (SEPC). That was the first offering to event planners for the certificate in the state.

Cobo Center has received numerous awards for efforts that include everything from environmentally safe products to composting. "There's an excitement and enthusiasm. We're really trying to be a sustainable building and do cutting-edge work," he says.

"We're currently embarking on LEED certification and we continue to keep our Green Meeting Industry Council (GMIC) membership. We're the ninth facility worldwide to achieve the International Green Meeting ASTM standard. Clients look for us to be as sustainable as possible. They love it when we buy local and we are working toward all produce served at Cobo Center being grown at Cobo Center. It's an ambitious goal."

"We're working diligently toward this goal to make it a reality," he explains. In addition to honeybees on the center's Green Roof, the staff also grows rosemary, oregano, basil and thyme and is working on growing all lettuce for all the salads.

"It's the next big push. It's critical to keep looking

and moving forward. We're in the 'make it happen' business," says Molinari. "Detroit is really taking big steps to work with our team and we're almost a little city in ourselves. It's a very walkable city with an elevated light rail train our vendors can use and a mobile rental bike station. There's a lot happening and it's really exciting to be a part of it."



FRESH PERSPECTIVE

In Port Huron, they've gone green in more ways than one with a new state-of-the-art facility, according to Gino Giacumbo, general manager for SMG-managed Blue Water Convention Center.

"We are a relatively new facility so we have the benefit of not having retrofitted lights and sprinklers, etc. That's the benefit of not having to change out things on a regular basis. We have all LED bulbs and there are no paper towels; we have air dryers," he says.

Downtown, the Zagster bike-share program makes it easy to get to and from the facility where water stations and glassware await instead of plastic bottles.

Special features, such as light sensors, were incorporated into the building. "It was built with this in mind. As we move forward and purchase new items, we're always thinking about sustainability," says Giacumbo. "From recycled copy paper to an energy-efficient dishwasher, it's always on our mind." 🌱



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