Qualitative Assessment Template

Ewing Green Team

# Name of Action

Hold a Green Fair

# In a few short sentences, please describe the action and identify your partners.

The EGT has worked on the Living Local Expo, the area’s local green fair since the 2013 event. Our collaboration began with Sustainable Lawrence and the Hopewell Township Valley Green Team but has expanded to include 7 communities in Mercer County. In fact, the collaboration has become so successful that the event is now under the auspices of the Mercer County Sustainability Coalition, a formal alliance of green teams and sustainability organizations in Mercer County. The 2015 event was held on Saturday, March 28th at the NJ National Guard Armory on Eggerts Crossing Rd in Lawrenceville. The 2016 event was held at Rider University Alumni Gymnasium on March 19th. Approximately 70 vendors participated in the 2016 event and about 900 people attended.

Ewing members participated in all parts of planning. An EGT member created the Living Local Expo website (<http://livinglocalexpo.net>) in January 2015 and has managed it since. A member also manages the registrations and record keeping for all of the participants. Another member manages the Arts portion of the Expo, finding participants/vendors, and running the kids crafts for the day. In addition, we create the Expo flyer, as well as additional outreach materials. We are all responsible for recruiting new vendors and participants.

Even if the action was performed by volunteers, or you got in-kind donations, please estimate your costs and the time commitment required to complete the action.

The Ewing Green Team’s estimated time commitment (at a minimum) was 165 hours as reflected in our ***Green Team Aid to the Living Local Expo 2016*** document upload. The Ewing Green Team was not responsible for any expenses; those were paid out by the Mercer County Hub.

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Date** | **Item** | **Vendor** | **Payor** | **$** |
| 4/2/2016 | Expo Ad | Princeton Packet | Mercer County | 835.00 |
| 4/30/2016 | Expo Ad | NJ Advance Media | Mercer County | 1679.00 |
|  | US 1 Newspaper Ad | US 1 | Mercer County Sustainability Coalition | 227.00 |
|  | Advertising | Community News | Mercer County Sustainability Coalition | 627.00 |
| 2/2/2016 | Website | Wix.com | Mercer County Sustainability Coalition | 111.00 |
| 2/9/2016 | Website Domain | Wix.com | Mercer County Sustainability Coalition | 24.85 |
|  | Facilities rental | Rider University | Mercer County Sustainability Coalition | 939.00 |
|  | 100 post cards |  | Mercer County Sustainability Coalition | 252.00 |
|  | Wallaby Tales entertainment | Wallaby Tales | Mercer County Sustainability Coalition | 295.00 |
|  | Expo Video | Judith Robinson | Mercer County Sustainability Coalition | 500.00 |
|  | Health Dept. permit | Lawrence Township | Mercer County Sustainability Coalition | 90.00 |
|  | Signage |  | Mercer County Sustainability Coalition | 547.96 |
|  |  |  |  | **6127.81** |

Assess what worked and what could be done if this action is tried again in the community.

The collaboration between the communities definitely worked and gets better every year. We reached out to more communities this year than past and were successful in drawing in more partners. The group attempted to resolve issue of determining how much work is required to be considered a full partner. To move the Expo forward, we would like new partners to work at bringing in new vendors from their section of the county.

Attendance was down a bit this year from last. We are uncertain if this is because:

* We had a new venue. (We moved from the NJ National Guard Armory on Eggerts Crossing Rd. to Rider University Alumni Gymnasium on Rte. 206 in Lawrenceville to put the Expo on the bus line.)
* Signage was a problem. We were not allowed to post signage around campus and around town as much as we would like.
* Having run this action for 11 years, perhaps it needs to be reinvented and revitalized a bit. Are people tired of it? What must we do to continue to appeal to a wider audience?

In past years, Expo planning began in January after the holidays. This past year we held a couple of meetings in the late fall, dropped off over the holidays, and then resumed in January. It was decided that a small subcommittee needs to continue to meet throughout the year for long term planning. Perhaps some of our planning is too last minute to get the vendors and collaborators we would like. We need to get the location, theme, schools, etc. on board earlier. We also need to consider what we must do to continue to appeal to a broad audience.

# What are the next steps for this action?

As stated above, longer term planning and re-evaluation of best practices for this event. There are plans to begin meeting monthly beginning in June.

# Feedback from meeting following Expo

## Ideas, Feedback & Info for 11th Annual Living Local Expo in 2017

* Terhune food sales were light so consider putting in a different location next year
* Speakers – need to figure out the volume issue in the speakers room so if presenter wants to show a video with sound
* Signage – outdoor, Rider has to make the signs, Rider had to approve the signs – have a single person in charge of making sure signage is effective
* Ed has banners need to add time of event to banners for next year
* Ad paid for by county only went out on Friday (day before)
* Many people passed by the EVs as they entered
* Next year to put a bigger push on the schools & their PR
* Better signage for EVs, cold weather & location deterred traffic to EVs
* Talk to Sustainable Jersey to get into the SJ schools events prior to LLE to promote event
* Need to be clear that not at the Gym but at the Student Center –better directions in marketing materials
* Other ideas – piggy back on other events like at Mercer County Park
* Do an outdoor event? – Tricky that time of year with weather uncertainty
* Look at TCNJ as site next year
* Have farm cooking demonstrations
* Have more fun things taking place as a celebration
* Pay a professional marketer next year
* Tenesha(Sp?) Potential marketing person for next year? Currently helping the NJ Small Business Development Center
* Could Rider Marketing Class use Living Local Expo as a marketing Capstone project?
* Look to further partner with Rider to help build participation and attendance
* Add “Green Fair” to event title in marketing to clarify what it is
* Acoustic musician in front hall next year?
* Vendor registration cutoff week before event to organize tables, can accept vendor if they bring their own table.
* Advertise at the Garden Theater.