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**Reimagining a Sustainable Business Program for Fort Collins**

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FORT COLLINS, Colo. – For 20 years, Fort Collins businesses who participated in the City of Fort Collins ClimateWise program saved over \$94 million and reduced carbon emissions by 1.4 metric tons. In partnership with the Sustainable Living Association (SLA), the city is now handing off its program model, which ended in 2020, to ‘reimagine’ and develop a new sustainability program for businesses, based on the current needs of the Fort Collins business community.

The City of Fort Collins first launched the ClimateWise program in 2000 to support its Climate Action plan, which was first adopted in 1999. The goal was to reduce carbon emissions through voluntary business engagement and sustainable business practices and over the years more than 600 businesses took advantage of the program’s resources.

One focus of creating a new sustainable business program is to ensure the voices of Fort Collins’ historically underrepresented businesses and stakeholders are represented. “ClimateWise was successful because of the input from many Fort Collins business members. In order to grow the awareness and engagement of this program, we feel it’s important to work with a lens on equity and inclusion by leading with race.” states Kellie Falbo, the Executive Director and Co-Founder of SLA.

SLA’s Leadership Team includes a core team from the SLA and the City of Fort Collins along with eight representatives from the Fort Collins business community. The redesign of the ClimateWise program model will assess barriers to participating in the program, past challenges and strengths and how to align to existing City community goals. Additionally, the team will create a larger Steering Committee to aid in the process of the barrier analysis, broader business engagement and pilot program implementation.

For more information and how to participate, visit [www.sustainablelivingassociation.org/sustainable-business-program/](http://www.sustainablelivingassociation.org/sustainable-business-program/)