

# THE CHARGING STATION

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF A<sup>2</sup>ZERO AND  
THE ANN ARBOR OFFICE OF SUSTAINABILITY AND INNOVATIONS



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## ABOUT THE EDITOR



This edition of the Charging Station is brought to you by the staff of the Office of the Sustainability and Innovations.

Thank you for a fantastic 2025! Have a restful and joyful holiday season, and we'll see you in 2026.



*City of Ann Arbor staff documenting the district geothermal project in the Bryant Neighborhood, November 2025.*

## WELCOME

Welcome from the City of Ann Arbor's Office of Sustainability and Innovations (OSI). This month, OSI is delighted to share a look back at major sustainability activities in 2025. If you're interested in learning more about any of the activities or organizations featured in this issue and getting involved, please visit our website: [www.a2gov.org/sustainability](http://www.a2gov.org/sustainability). As always, thank you for your interest in sustainability activities in Ann Arbor!

## LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Equity and justice are at the center of A<sup>2</sup>ZERO and staff in OSI are continuing to ground our work in these critical principles. In that light, we'd like to take a moment to honor the geographic and historic space we share. We acknowledge that the land the City of Ann Arbor occupies is the ancestral, traditional, and contemporary lands of the Anishinaabe and Wyandot peoples. We further acknowledge that our city stands, like almost all property in the United States, on lands obtained, generally in unconscionable ways, from indigenous peoples. The taking of this land was formalized by the Treaty of Detroit in 1807. Knowing where we live, work, study, and recreate does not change the past, but a thorough understanding of the ongoing consequences of this past can empower us in our work to create a future that supports human flourishing and justice for all individuals.

# PROGRAMMATIC UPDATES

## WHAT A<sup>2</sup>ZERO HAS BEEN UP TO SINCE THE ANNUAL REPORT IN JULY

The second half of 2025 was just as busy as the first half, filled with accomplishments across every team at the Office of Sustainability and Innovations (OSI). Detailed in the following pages are these chapters of progress in the story of our transition to community-wide carbon neutrality by the year 2030, made possible by and dedicated to the residents and organizations who have supported and contributed. We are grateful for your collaboration and look forward to everything we'll be able to achieve, together, in 2026!

### Strategy 1: Power our electrical grid with 100% renewable energy

- **Solarize** is closing out another strong year. While the federal tax credit for residential solar and battery storage is phasing out on December 31 2025, Solarize will continue in 2026 and is open to residents throughout Washtenaw County. OSI will continue to run Solarize groups, offering bulk-buy discounts to participants, connecting them with neighbors, and helping participants move toward their own energy independence.
- City Council voted unanimously in October to accept \$10.8 million from the U.S. Department of Energy to implement a **district-scale geothermal heating and cooling system in the Bryant neighborhood**. This is the second phase of the funding opportunity, with the first phase supporting engagement and the design of a system capable of providing nearly all of the heating and cooling needs for the 262 homes there, along with the local elementary school and community center. Upon approval, OSI has continued to move forward with its collaborators to finalize the design and prepare to start construction on the system in 2026.
- OSI has been working with an engineering contractor and internal departments to identify additional areas in Ann Arbor to begin exploring geothermal potential. Through a pre-feasibility review, the team has identified three additional areas for a deeper analysis. The team will spend 2026 diving further into those areas to determine the feasibility of district geothermal there while supporting the SEU's work to evaluate the best way to deploy geothermal assets.
- The City broke ground on its largest onsite solar system, a 480 kW system at the Ann Arbor municipal airport connected to the Steere Farm water well, where water is pumped to the Water Treatment Plant. Construction also began on rooftop solar systems at City Hall, Ann Arbor Justice Center, and Fire Station 1.
- The City received its Direct Pay: Clean Energy payment from the federal government for sustainability work, including solar and battery storage systems at City sites and electric vehicles (EVs) purchased for the City fleet, for over \$430,000. This brings total reimbursements to around \$750,000 for 10 solar installations, 29 vehicles, and 1 energy storage system.

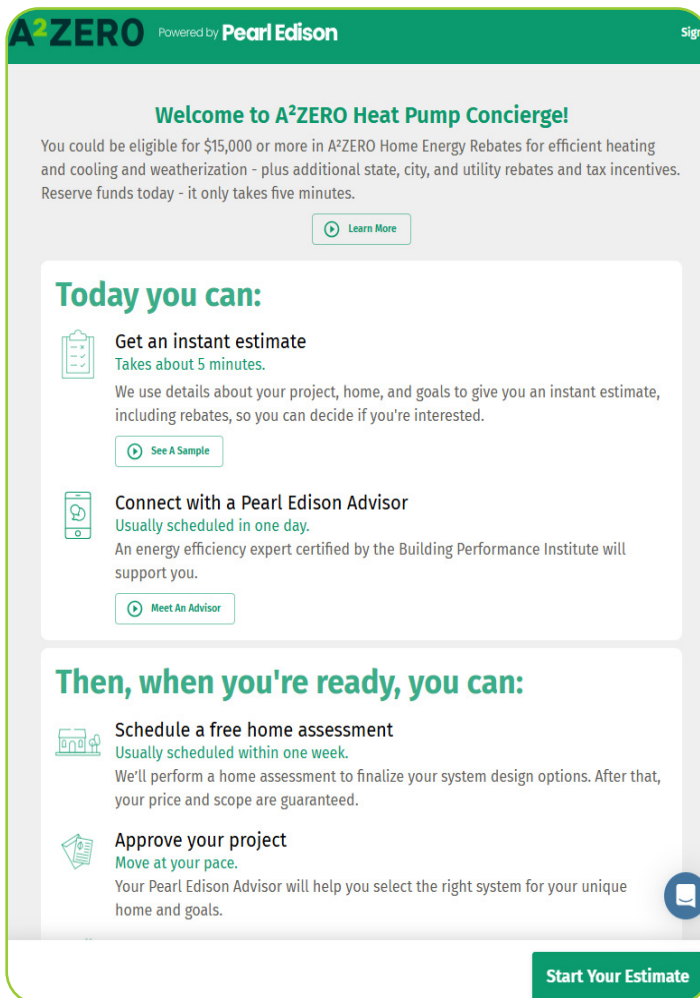
*Drilling for the geothermal system at the Bryant Community Center.*





# PROGRAMMATIC UPDATES

WHAT A<sup>2</sup>ZERO HAS BEEN UP TO SINCE THE ANNUAL REPORT IN JULY



*The home page of the A<sup>2</sup>ZERO Heat Pump Concierge.*

## Strategy 2: Switch our Appliances and Vehicles from Gas to Electric

- The **Heat Pump Concierge** is assisting dozens of Ann Arbor residents in switching from fossil gas furnaces to clean heat pumps. Approximately 10% of new HVAC installations in Ann Arbor are now heat pumps!
- **Four electric refuse trucks and the Ann Arbor Police Department's first electric patrol car** are now in operation. The City has electrified most easily electrifiable fleet vehicles, and is working to develop potential solutions for the remaining vehicles.
- Stephen Janoyan has joined OSI to lead EV work, including the implementation of a Charging and Fueling Infrastructure Grant for the expansion of public EV charging in Ann Arbor. Site identification and NEPA reviews are in progress. The City also funded 2 publicly accessible EV chargers installed by MAVD through OSI's Commercial EV Charger Program.

## Strategy 3: Improve the Energy Efficiency of our buildings

- The **Green Rental Housing Ordinance** was passed by Council in June and since then OSI has been working to prepare for when it becomes effective in January 2026. During the past few months, OSI has updated the Green Rental Housing resource hubs – one for landlords and one for renters – to help everyone work towards more comfortable, affordable, and healthier rental housing in Ann Arbor, and is preparing the backend systems for when the ordinance goes into effect.
- The **A<sup>2</sup>ZERO Home Energy Advisor** has now helped over 480 people obtain "Path to Zero" decarbonization plans, understand their home energy use, evaluate bids and estimates, and plan projects.
- In accordance with the **Home Energy Rating Disclosure**, we have completed over 800 Home Energy Assessments, and began outreach with new wrap-around services to help new homeowners improve the efficiency of their home.
- OSI is proud to collaborate with DTE to fund over \$1.2 million in comprehensive weatherization work now underway at Colonial Square Cooperative. This important work lowers energy bills, makes homes more comfortable, and helps set up homes for future electrification. If your community is considering weatherization, electrification, or renewables, OSI is happy to discuss opportunities with you. Contact us at [sustainability@a2gov.org](mailto:sustainability@a2gov.org).
- This year, **rebates for more than 80 electric leaf blowers** were provided to local businesses providing lawn care and landscaping services.
- 988 **A<sup>2</sup>ZERO Home Energy Rebates** have been claimed with \$1.6 million committed to residents since the program launch in 2024. And more are available!



*Stephen Janoyan, latest addition to the OSI team and leader of EV work.*

# PROGRAMMATIC UPDATES

## WHAT A<sup>2</sup>ZERO HAS BEEN UP TO SINCE THE ANNUAL REPORT IN JULY

*Attendees of the 4th Annual Local Food Festival enjoy samples after the Local Chef Cooking Demonstration.*



### Strategy 5: Change the way we use, reuse, and dispose of materials to be more circular.

#### A<sup>2</sup>ZERO Swaps

- OSI hosted 21 swaps, many of which are the monthly swaps taking place the 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday of every month at City Hall from 4PM - 7PM. OSI collaborated with Ann Arbor Pride, Green Apple Play Schools, the University of Michigan, Marquee Arts, & more to host swaps across the City.
- **A<sup>2</sup>ZERO Swaps** recirculated more than 600 pounds of clothing, keeping textile pollution out of landfills and our local waterways.

#### Circular Economy Action Planning (CEAP)

- CEAP is Ann Arbor's Strategy to Promote a thriving local Circular Economy, crafted by residents, businesses, & circular economy experts. Phase 1 of resident engagement was completed and business and institutional engagement will begin soon. Drafts of the Circular Economy Action Plan will be shared for review and feedback.

#### Returnable Containers

- OSI partnered with the Guild of Artists and Artisans to offer returnable cups during A2 Artoberfest where we achieved a 98% return rate for 9oz cups and a 92% return rate for 16 oz cups.

#### Electronics Collections

- OSI hosted 4 **Electronics Collections** events and around 61,000 pounds of electronics were diverted as a result.
- These four events reduced greenhouse gas emissions by nearly 90,000 pounds. That is equivalent to avoiding 100,800 miles driven by passenger vehicles or 48.5 acres of forest sequestering carbon.
- This program has successfully graduated from its pilot phase and will be expanding in 2026.

#### Air Quality Monitoring

- OSI deployed a full network of **10 air quality sensors** across the city, measuring particulate matter, nitrogen dioxide, and ozone.
- We launched an **air quality map**, in collaboration with Clarity Movement, which shows the current Air Quality Index (AQI) at each of the ten monitoring sites. This map also allows community members to sign up for alerts when AQI reaches the 'unhealthy' level at specific sites. There is also a dashboard showing AQI data over time and data on individual pollutant concentrations.



# PROGRAMMATIC UPDATES

WHAT A<sup>2</sup>ZERO HAS BEEN UP TO SINCE THE ANNUAL REPORT IN JULY

## Strategy 5 (Continued)

### 10,000 Trees

- 11,151 trees have been distributed through the program.
- OSI distributed a survey to everyone who has received a tree so far to gather data on the status of their trees. Information on approximately 18% of the trees distributed was collected – and of those, approximately 47% are still alive.
- OSI created a program and selected a vendor to perform tree maintenance work on private property for residents in need. In addition, OSI has issued a request for proposals for a vendor to plant trees on private property in under canopied areas of the city. Both of these contracts will be funded under a \$1,000,000 IRA Urban and Community Forestry grant from the USFS, with American Forests as a pass-through partner.

### Pollinator-Aware Yard Care

- The program now has 547 participants.
- OSI piloted a coupon code program in conjunction with the Washtenaw County Conservation District to offer \$3,000 in discounts on native trees & plants purchased through their annual Fall Tree and Native Plant Sale. Exploration is underway to expand reach of the program.

### Sustainable Food

- OSI completed and published [the A<sup>2</sup>ZERO Community Cookbook](#), a practical guide to sustainable eating in the Ann Arbor area, featuring 70+ recipes and 20 inspiring stories from local farmers, chefs, and community leaders working to make our food system more sustainable and equitable. The cookbook can be viewed and downloaded at [osi.a2gov.org/cookbook](https://osi.a2gov.org/cookbook).
- We hosted [the 4th annual Ann Arbor Local Food Festival](#) in August, featuring live chef demonstrations, local produce sampling, a storytelling circle, live music from Community High Jazz Band, games, prizes, and more! This year, participation was robust, with over 50 businesses and organizations represented.
- Through a contract with local nonprofit, VegMichigan, we have engaged over 700 people to share the benefits of eating a more plant rich diet to reduce one's climate impact!



- Through **the 30-Day Plant-Based Pledge Program**, offered in collaboration with VegMichigan, 240 Ann Arbor residents tried plant-based eating for the first time and received a free bag of plant-based food, along with information about how incorporating more plant foods can reduce a household's carbon impact. 97% of Pledge program participants reported that they will continue to eat a more plant-forward diet after completing the program! To learn more about our collaboration with VegMichigan, visit [vegmichigan.org/climate](https://vegmichigan.org/climate).
- In collaboration with VegMichigan, we continue to host monthly climate-friendly meal clubs, having supported four local businesses and introduced 37 attendees to delicious plant-based options in the Ann Arbor area.
- Since July, the [Ann Arbor Sustainable Food Business Coalition](#) has gathered to discuss strategies, barriers, and opportunities to integrate sustainable practices into operations. Topics included Food Safety and Sustainability and developing a set of Sustainable Dining Standards for the City of Ann Arbor's Sustainable Food Purchasing Program.
- OSI is proud to be an inaugural member of the [MI 2030 Food Waste Coalition](#), a statewide network of businesses, organizations, governments, and individuals dedicated to the goal of reducing food waste in Michigan landfills by 50% by the year 2030.

# PROGRAMMATIC UPDATES

WHAT A<sup>2</sup>ZERO HAS BEEN UP TO SINCE THE ANNUAL REPORT IN JULY

*A<sup>2</sup>ZERO Ambassadors listen to a presentation on the Sustainable Energy Utility given by its Director, Shoshannah Lenski, at the 2025 A<sup>2</sup>ZERO Ambassador Summit.*

## STRATEGY 6: Enhancing the resilience of our people, natural systems, and institutions.

### Resilience Hubs

- In 2025, Peace Neighborhood Center and Green Baxter Court Community Center received grants of \$250,000 and \$180,000, respectively. These funds, provided by the Community Climate Action Millage, will support the ongoing efforts to designate these important sites as two of Ann Arbor's Resilience Hubs.
- This summer, Peace Neighborhood Center completed an LED lighting retrofit, installing lighting controls that will result in energy savings over the system's lifespan. These savings will be reinvested into programs and services that benefit our community. Additionally, Peace Neighborhood Center successfully raised \$250,000 to match the investment from the Office of Sustainability and Innovations for their Resilience Hub work, paving the way for deeper efficiency and electrification work and the eventual adoption of renewable energy systems and battery storage.
- Green Baxter Court Community Center is preparing to adopt solar energy and battery storage systems, which are expected to be operational by 2026. In the interim, the Community Action Network staff who implement programs and services at Green Baxter will utilize a \$10,000 Sustaining Ann Arbor Together Grant (SA2T) to enhance the Community Center's resilience programming. Learn more about these two Resilience Hub sites in September's issue of [The Charging Station](#).



### A<sup>2</sup>ZERO Ambassadors

- In 2025, the [A<sup>2</sup>ZERO Ambassador Program](#) graduated its 7th Cohort of Ambassadors, bringing the total number of Ambassadors to 149.
- The [Ambassador Impact Map](#) was launched to illustrate the achievements, dedication, and reach of the A<sup>2</sup>ZERO Ambassadors.
- A<sup>2</sup>ZERO Ambassadors rounded out 2025 with attending the annual **A<sup>2</sup>ZERO Ambassador Summit** where Ambassadors were able to be in community, learn about exciting upcoming sustainability initiatives, and set goals for the next year.

### Household Preparedness

- In partnership with the Office of Emergency Management (OEM), OSI distributed 83 emergency kits to community members who participated in household preparedness seminars.
- In September, to celebrate National Preparedness Month, OEM and OSI hosted preparedness forward events for the greater Ann Arbor community and for internal city staff, fostering a learning space where households were able to craft a unique household preparedness plan to fit their needs.

## STRATEGY 7: Community engagement, metrics tracking, reporting, and relationship building

- Our [A2Zero Facebook](#) page received 103.1k views, 2.7k link clicks, and a 52% follower increase, with 291 followers.
- Our [@a2zero2030 Instagram](#) page received 75,8k views, 1,7k interactions, and 244 new followers (16% increase). Page now at 854 followers.
- We created a [LinkedIn](#) page September 3 and in the past two months, gained 220 followers and 7,281 views.
- OSI filmed 4 episodes of [Green Light](#), with 300 total views.
- OSI published 19 press releases, staff conducted over 30 media interviews.
- Dr. Missy Stults appeared on NPR Marketplace: [As the job market slows inflation speeds up](#).



# PROGRAMMATIC UPDATES

WHAT A<sup>2</sup>ZERO HAS BEEN UP TO SINCE THE ANNUAL REPORT IN JULY

*The start of Green Fair 2025 on a very sunny September day.*



## STRATEGY 7 (Continued)

- Our office appeared in Fast Company: [Ann Arbor is Reinventing the Power Company](#)
- 1,071 subscribers were added to our [newsletters](#) – 781 to our main newsletter, the Charging Station, with overall open rates averaging 68%.
- Contractors were selected to do \$3.1 million worth of home energy upgrades in the Bryant neighborhood through the Michigan Public Service Commission's Renewable Energy and Electrification Infrastructure and Development Grant and construction began for the first 15 households. Through this grant, more than 50 homes in total will be able to receive insulation, new windows, drainage remediation, electrified appliances, and solar.
- Regarding geothermal, the Bryant Community Center's system was installed in July and is now providing 100% of the building's heating and cooling! See energy team section for Bryant district geothermal update.
- In September the [BBC released a video](#) highlighting the work we're supporting in Bryant.
- OSI collaborated with the leadership of Pittsfield Village to pursue a DTE multi-family weatherization assistance program that could provide impactful air sealing and insulation upgrades to all 400+ units in the community. The community is also collaborating with OSI to schedule and complete a test bore to assess the feasibility of a future district geothermal project in the neighborhood.
- More than 80 exhibitors and thousands of visitors showed up and showed out for the [2025 A<sup>2</sup>ZERO Green Fair](#) on September 19th! Highlights from this year's event include the unveiling of the City's new mobile solar trailer, downtown tree tours, a clothing swap, an electric school bus, and a heat pump giveaway prize!
- For a second year, OSI is sponsoring a [Cinema & Sustainability series](#) with Marquee Arts, a monthly mini-series showcasing films and documentaries that educate and inspire around sustainability and climate action! Through the support of a Sustaining Ann Arbor Together Grant, the 2025 series is free for the general public, and has attracted more than 450 attendees over the first three screenings September – November.
- The [Sustaining Ann Arbor Together](#) community grant program hosted an award ceremony and celebration to recognize the program's recent grantees. Nine organizations attended, shared inspiring stories and updates about their projects, and took photos with Mayor Christopher Taylor and City Administrator Milton Dohoney Jr. The review committee continues to review applications as they are submitted for the funding still available for the 2025-2026 fiscal year.



*Staff from Zingerman's Roadhouse join Green Light to talk about the sustainability work they're doing.*

# COLLABORATOR SPOTLIGHT

THE SUSTAINABLE FOOD BUSINESS COALITION FACILITATES COLLABORATION AND TRANSFORMATION



**SUSTAINABLE  
FOOD BUSINESS  
COALITION**  
ANN ARBOR AREA

Two years since the first gathering of the Ann Arbor Sustainable Food Business Coalition (SFBC), the network remains a vibrant forum for sustainable collaboration among local food system businesses.

Now entering its third year, the SFBC convenes members quarterly to address common challenges related to sustainability in the food system. Sourcing local and sustainable ingredients, reducing waste, improving facility efficiency, and fostering a sustainable workplace culture are just a few of the topics discussed during the group's 2025 gatherings.

The SFBC not only provides a vehicle for increasing connection and collaboration among members but also an opportunity for business leaders to get together and "talk shop," as one SFBC member reflected during a recent event. During gatherings, members trade stories of sustainability successes and tribulations, swap tips and resources, and troubleshoot shared challenges through group dialogue. At each meeting, ample time is allocated for unstructured networking and community building.

Each SFBC event is an opportunity for a business with expertise in a topic to share their insights and showcase their efforts, while pulling back the curtain on their implementation process and lessons learned. Additionally, the SFBC invites outside experts to present to the group, building members' collective knowledge and highlighting new opportunities for growth.

Another unique element of the group is the opportunity to collaborate on and provide insight into upcoming City sustainable food policies and programs. Participation in the SFBC by City staff ensures that new programming is responsive to business needs and priorities. The City also partners with local non-profit resource providers, such as the Ann Arbor-Washtenaw 2030 District, to offer technical assistance and funding for sustainability initiatives. Additionally, staff provide administrative support, ensure regular communication, share funding opportunities, and broadcast upcoming events and trainings of interest to the group.

During the most recent SFBC gathering at Argus Farm Stop, Kristen Schweighoefer and Dainna Raye from the Washtenaw County Department of Environmental Health shared insights about navigating food safety regulations while implementing sustainability initiatives. The meeting was attended by 15 local restaurants, entrepreneurs, and non-profit representatives. Participants had an opportunity to ask questions and share their perspectives on how current Michigan food law has affected their ability to implement sustainability initiatives, like reducing their use of single-use plastics or switching to electric appliances.

Looking ahead to 2026, the SFBC looks forward to taking on new projects to increase local sourcing, reduce food waste, and increase the amount of surplus food redistributed to community members in need. Additionally, they are seeking to expand the network with new members and leadership! If you're a food or hospitality business owner, or have a suggestion of a business who you think should be in the SFBC, please reach out to Azella Markgraf, Sustainable Food Coordinator, at [amarkgraf@a2gov.org](mailto:amarkgraf@a2gov.org).

Business representatives are invited to join the SFBC for their **2026 Kickoff, a Food & Hospitality Sustainability Social, on January 12th, 2026, from 2:00 - 3:30 pm at Cobblestone Farm!** Connect with peers, resources, and support to kickstart your sustainability journey in the new year and learn about opportunities to engage in Ann Arbor's growing sustainable food ecosystem. Light refreshments will be provided. RSVP at [osi.a2gov.org/sfbc2026kickoff](https://osi.a2gov.org/sfbc2026kickoff).



# TIS THE SEASON: HOLIDAY RECIPE

A RECIPE FROM THE A<sup>2</sup>ZERO COMMUNITY COOKBOOK

## CREAMY BUTTERNUT SQUASH & SAGE PASTA

From the Kitchen of: Shanel DeWalt, Chef, Make Food Not Waste



**Preparation Time:** 20 minutes | **Cook Time:** 45 minutes | **Servings:** 4 bowls  
**Common Allergens:** Wheat (Optional), Tree Nuts (Optional)

"This dish is a cozy, plant-based take on a creamy pasta, with the natural sweetness of the roasted butternut squash paired with the earthy aroma of sage and garlic. I love how the velvety sauce feels indulgent yet wholesome, transforming simple ingredients into something elegant and comforting. It's flavorful, satisfying, and a crowd-pleaser!" says Chef Shanel.

### INSTRUCTIONS:

#### PREPARE THE SAUCE:

- Preheat the oven to 400°F.
- Toss the cubed butternut squash and unpeeled garlic cloves with 1 Tablespoon olive oil, a pinch of salt, and black pepper. Spread the squash and garlic onto a baking sheet in a single layer.
- Roast the squash and garlic for 25-30 minutes, until the squash is tender and slightly caramelized, and the garlic is soft.
- While the squash roasts, heat 1 Tablespoon of olive oil in a skillet over medium heat.
- Sauté the diced onion until it is translucent, about 5-7 minutes.
- Add the dried sage (or fresh sage leaves) and smoked paprika to the onion, cooking for another minute to bloom the flavors.
- Peel the roasted garlic. Transfer the roasted squash, peeled roasted garlic, sautéed onion mixture, miso paste, nutritional yeast, and 1 cup of plant-based milk to a blender.
- Blend the sauce until it is smooth, adding more plant-based milk as needed to reach your desired sauce consistency. Taste and adjust the seasoning with salt and black pepper.

#### MAKE THE PASTA:

- Bring a large pot of salted water to a boil and cook the pasta according to the package instructions. Reserve about 1/2 cup of pasta water before draining the pasta.
- Return the drained pasta to the pot or a large skillet. Pour the butternut squash sauce over the pasta, tossing to coat it evenly. Add the reserved pasta water as needed to loosen the sauce and make it cling perfectly to the noodles. Serve the pasta hot, garnished with fresh parsley and optional toasted walnuts or pumpkin seeds for crunch.

### INGREDIENTS:

#### FOR THE SAUCE:

- 1 medium butternut squash, peeled, seeded, and cubed
- 6 cloves garlic, with skins left on for roasting
- 1 small yellow onion, diced
- 2 Tablespoons olive oil, divided
- 1 Tablespoon white or yellow miso paste
- 2 Tablespoons nutritional yeast
- 1 teaspoon smoked paprika
- 1 teaspoon dried sage, or 4-5 fresh sage leaves
- 1-2 cups unsweetened plant-based milk, like oat or almond
- Salt and pepper, to taste

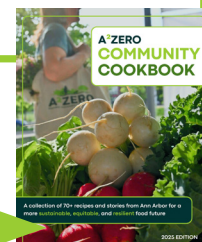
#### FOR THE PASTA:

- 12 ounces pasta of choice, such as fettuccine, penne, or spaghetti
- Fresh parsley (for garnish)

#### OPTIONAL:

- Toasted walnuts or pumpkin seeds

This recipe and more in the A<sup>2</sup>ZERO Community Cookbook at [osi.a2gov.org/cookbook](https://osi.a2gov.org/cookbook).



# ANNOUNCEMENTS

**NEW Residential Rebates for Leaf-Blowers.** The City of Ann Arbor just launched [a new rebate program specifically for rakes and electric leaf blowers](#) beginning November 21, 2025, through the end of the year, or until funding is expended. Designed to help lower the cost of transitioning from gas to electric leaf blowers in accordance with Ann Arbor's leaf blower ordinance, these rebates will be available to all Ann Arbor residents.

**Business Rebates for Electric Leaf Blowers** – Business rebates for electric leaf blowers have been reinstated through September 30, 2026, or until funding is expended. Designed to help lower the cost of transitioning from gas to electric leaf blowers in accordance with Ann Arbor's leaf blower ordinance, these rebates will be available to businesses that provide lawn care or landscaping services to properties located in Ann Arbor.

**Ann Arbor City Council Votes Unanimously to Accept Nearly \$11 Million for District Geothermal System** – Ann Arbor City Council on October 7, 2025, voted unanimously to accept nearly \$11 million (\$10,788,167) from the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) to implement a district-scale geothermal heating and cooling system in the Bryant neighborhood. To learn more about this project, visit the City's geothermal heating and cooling website.

**Ann Arbor Awarded \$250,000 Grant to Advance Sustainable Energy Utility** – The City of Ann Arbor has been selected to receive a \$250,000 grant from the Municipal Investment Fund (MIF) to advance its newly created Sustainable Energy Utility. The City of Ann Arbor will use the MIF grant to prepare an operational plan and financial strategy to launch a newly created, innovative and renewable energy-centered Sustainable Energy Utility (SEU) that accelerates the city's clean energy transformation while simultaneously fostering economic development and enhancing climate resilience. To learn more about the SEU, please visit [a2gov.org/a2seu](https://a2gov.org/a2seu).

**City of Ann Arbor Recognized as Sustainable Public Entity of the Year by Michigan Sustainable Business Forum.** The City of Ann Arbor was awarded the 2025 Sustainable Business of the Year: Public Sector Award from the Michigan Sustainable Business Forum on November 13 at their Triple Bottom Line Bash. The award recognizes a local or regional government for its efforts to advance community sustainability and sustainable business practices in their community and operations. It was awarded to the City of Ann Arbor for their work under A<sup>2</sup>ZERO, the City's plan, vision, framework, and associated actions to achieve a just and equitable transition to carbon neutrality, community-wide, by the year 2030.

For more information on our upcoming events, please visit [www.a2gov.org/sustainability/events](https://www.a2gov.org/sustainability/events).



*Residents of the Bryant Community join for a celebration of the \$11 million grant for the district geothermal system, to learn from the team working on the project and hear from Mayor Taylor on the importance of the project.*



## UPCOMING EVENTS

### ANN ARBOR SOLAR STORIES Dec. 4, 7PM - 8PM | Virtual

One-hour virtual event hosted by the GLREA. Come hear from Ann Arborites who have gone solar, and have a chance to ask them all your questions! [Register at GLREA's website](#) for "Thursday Night Energy Events" to receive meeting links.

### MIDNIGHT MADNESS: A²ZERO WINTER GEAR SWAP Dec. 4, 7PM - 10PM | Main Street, Ann Arbor

Come find new-to-you winter gear and/or donate cold weather clothes that you no longer want at the A²ZERO Midnight Madness Winter Gear Swap! Everyone is welcome to participate; you do not have to donate to take items. Participants who donate items will to be entered in a prize drawing for a \$100 gift card to a downtown business of your choice, provided by the Main Street Ann Arbor Association. [Visit the Swap's website to learn more and RSVP.](#)

### SUSTAINABLE ENERGY UTILITY CONTRACTOR WORKSHOP Dec. 9, 10 AM - 11 AM | Virtual

Event open to contractors interested in learning more about the Sustainable Energy Utility (SEU). The SEU was authorized by Ann Arbor voters in November, 2024 to be a 100% renewable, clean, resilient, reliable, opt-in utility and has since hired Shoshannah Lenski as its Executive Director. Email [seu@a2gov.org](mailto:seu@a2gov.org) for details to join.

### CINEMA AND SUSTAINABILITY: CATCHING THE SUN Dec. 10, 7PM - 9:30PM | State Theater

Following an unemployed American worker, a Tea Party activist, and a Chinese solar entrepreneur as they race to lead the clean-energy future. This documentary explores the worldwide economics of the burgeoning solar energy industry and its impact on hopeful job seekers in the United States. [Free admission - Please reserve tickets in advance for an accurate attendance.](#)

### MONTHLY CLOTHING SWAP Dec. 18, 4PM - 7PM | Council Chambers, City Hall

Join the Office of Sustainability and Innovations for monthly clothing swaps on the third Thursday of each month! These are a perfect way to give your gently used clothes a new home. And you might just find an item of clothing you have been looking for, without having to buy it new. How it works: Each person can bring up to 5 items of clothing in good condition (no rips, holes, stains, or unwashed items please!). Accessories are also welcome. You can take clothing without bringing anything, or bring clothing without taking anything. This is a completely free event.

## CONNECT WITH A²ZERO

Click the tiles below to see the latest updates, events, and more!

