

Enviro Racing Corp

Objective: Initially to host an environmentally responsible 5k running event in downtown Venice to not only educate the athletes but the public as well. The number of runners and running events we have in Sarasota County alone equates to thousands of participants which equates to thousands of single use plastic water bottles which in turn end up in our landfills. We need to change the way we host these athletic events as well as other community events. Going forward, Enviro Racing would like to assist other local races as well as city/community events conform to a higher environmental standard.

Community Benefit: Creating greater awareness of how we can be more responsible along with creating funds to be donated to organizations that are like minded and would also make our city greener. Options would include such things as beach clean up, adding recycling bins to downtown Venice, getting restaurants to switch to more eco friendly options and starting community composting. For businesses and institutions, a compelling reason to compost is to save money by cutting back on landfill fees. In 2011, Middlebury College in Vermont saved \$100,000 on landfill fees by composting 90% of food waste generated on campus. The 370 tons of food Middlebury composted translated into a savings of \$270 per ton of waste.

Dilemma: Eco friendly products such as bio plastics and compostable cups and straws are not actually as eco friendly as we think. Unless you have a commercial composting facility (which Venice does not, St. Pete does) there is no way to effectively break down these products the way they are intended. So even getting the restaurants to switch to these options doesn't solve the problem. 1/3 of all waste going into our landfills is food waste which cannot break down and be used in a landfill. Instead it creates more methane gasses which is far worse than carbon dioxide emissions.

Solution: Venice needs to build a commercial composting facility to take on both food waste and eco products. A viable composting facility would be turning that valuable food waste into usable compost to enrich our soils. There are several different options for composting systems so land would be needed or an existing landfill could be revamped. Once a composting facility is established, there would need to be a pick up the same way that trash and recycles are picked up and/or a drop off site for residents to take their compost. Residents would be charged an annual fee for this pick up regardless of their participation. This would not be mandatory but rather an option for residents of the city. Perhaps this is something that would require some "angel investors" initially.

Big Picture: It's time to start doing something to preserve our local environment. Development and growth is inevitable and unfortunately it is increasing at a rapid rate. We cannot sustain the trash that will be incurred and watch our precious resources disappear. Our oceans are already littered with plastic including our own Gulf of Mexico so it's time to start making a positive change.