

# Conversation Guide

## Sustainability

*Our quickly evolving global environment has been a point of concern for decades, but the conversation has reached a fever pitch in recent years. The issue that seems to be top of everyone's mind? Sustainability. Are we doing all we can to take better care of our natural resources?*



Sustaining  
Chicago:  
Protecting the  
city's environment  
in a changing  
world

In selecting this topic, your *Table* will discuss Chicago's environmental conditions and how this affects its residents. Keep these points in mind:

- Sustainability
  - According to the Chicago Department of Streets and Sanitation, only 10% of

Chicagoans actively recycle on a regular basis.

- Chicago has increased its number of LEED-certified Chicago buildings by more than 20% in the last few years.
- For 40 years, "Friends of the Chicago River" organization has worked to conserve and clean

the Chicago River, making it one of the cleanest in the nation.

- Chicago has more than seven million square-feet of green roof space.
- There are more than 300 miles of bike paths in Chicago.

Here are some *resources* to assist you as you prepare to discuss the environment and sustainability in the Chicago area.

- A short conversation on climate and environment in Chicago
- Global Climate change data
- Chicago-specific climate change data
- Studies show that young adults are leaving Chicago in high numbers

Here are some *suggested questions* for your *Table* discussion:

1. Sustainability is the avoidance of the depletion of natural resources in order to maintain an ecological balance. Based on the definition, do you think Chicago prioritizes sustainability, Is there a city (domestic or international) that does it well?
2. What could your community do, or what should happen in your community, to make it more resilient to climate emergencies, such as floods, heavy snowfalls and high temperatures?
3. Are there recycling options in your neighborhood?
4. What could we do in our households to promote sustainability?
5. How has your wardrobe changed from season to season over the years? Have your coats/jackets gotten heavier/lighter?