

# SUSTAINABILITY ACTION PLAN

WILFRID LAURIER UNIVERSITY

2018–2022



[wlu.ca](http://wlu.ca)

**LAURIER**   
*Inspiring Lives.*



A photograph of purple hosta flowers in bloom, with some buds still closed. The flowers are in the foreground, and the background is a soft-focus view of more flowers and greenery.

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

*Leading the way to a sustainable future*

As a biologist, I am deeply proud of Laurier's longstanding commitment in the areas of environmental, social and economic sustainability. Our strengths as an institution in academic programming and scholarly activities that seek to further our understanding of the natural environment, and our human interactions with such, are second to none.

Laurier has integrated its commitment to sustainability into its research, teaching and decision-making. The environment is one of five research focus areas in the university's Strategic Research Plan. Much of this research is interdisciplinary, linking our understanding of ecosystems with the development of environmentally and economically resilient communities. As well, the university has developed innovative courses, such as the interdisciplinary Perspectives on Sustainability, to help students learn about the challenge of sustainability from philosophical, social, economic and cultural perspectives; students may proceed from this introductory course to an Option in Sustainability.

From land-based teachings in our Indigenous programs, to the Applied Water Science BSc at the Waterloo campus and community-focused programs at the Brantford campus, it is clear our graduates leave Laurier ready to engage fully in the complexities of global sustainability.

Sustainability is a key part of Laurier's growth as a multi-campus, multi-community university. Our Milton campus, which will welcome its first students in fall 2019, will be located next to a stunning natural area recognized as a UNESCO World Biosphere Reserve. The 150-acre Milton campus includes 100 acres of protected Greenbelt lands, providing space for nature and recreation and serving as a living laboratory for students and researchers. The Town of Milton, confident in our sustainability practices, donated this land to Laurier for stewarding.

Along with a dedication to teaching and research, universities have both the capacity and the responsibility to lead by example in the pursuit of sustainability in our operations. At Laurier, we continue to make a concerted



# 18/22 SUSTAINABILITY ACTION PLAN

## WILFRID LAURIER UNIVERSITY

effort to improve our practices and increase our efficiency. Over the past five years, we have introduced numerous programs and achieved or surpassed many of the goals we set in our first Sustainability Action Plan. In just one example, Laurier has achieved a 32 percent reduction ( $\text{tCO}_2\text{e/ft}^2$ ) in its greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions since 2009.

In 2017, the university's Board of Governors approved a number of recommendations put forward by the Responsible Investment Working Group, including the enhancement of Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) risk management strategies; development of a responsible investment annual report; development of a fossil-free, impact investing endowment fund; and continued support for research into the effects of climate change, the sustainability of ecosystems and ESG-related issues.

It's this commitment to the environment that has earned us the title of most sustainable campus in Ontario and the third most sustainable campus in Canada from the Corporate Knights.

But we can always do better.

This new Sustainability Action Plan is based on extensive consultation with the Laurier community and our external partners. It outlines further enhancements to our operations, such as conservation and waste reduction initiatives to help us achieve new and existing external mandates. It also describes possible opportunities to expand our academic programming and experiential learning opportunities that will raise awareness among students and help prepare them for existing and emerging trends in employment and global challenges.

The pursuit of sustainability is an ongoing and collective endeavour. I would like to thank the many staff, students and faculty from across the Laurier community who have worked so hard to develop our latest Sustainability Action Plan. It is a clear and progressive strategy that will help Laurier continue to lead by example and inspire change.

*Deborah MacLatchy, PhD  
President and Vice-Chancellor  
Wilfrid Laurier University*







# LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The overarching goal of this Sustainability Action Plan is to provide a shared vision and pathway for Laurier to improve its relationship with the land and people with whom we share it. As such, it is important to further our understanding of the long-standing history that has brought Laurier to reside on the land, and to seek to understand our place within that history.

We would like to acknowledge that Wilfrid Laurier University and its campuses are located on the Haldimand tract, traditional territory of the Neutral, Anishnaabe (Anish-nah-bay) and Haudenosaunee (Hoe-den-no-show-nee) peoples. This land is part of the Dish with One Spoon Treaty between the Haudenosaunee and Anishnaabe peoples and symbolizes the agreement to share, protect our resources and not to engage in conflict. From the Haldimand Treaty of October 25, 1784 this territory is described as: “6 miles deep from each side of the river (Grand River) beginning at Lake Erie and extending in the proportion to the Head of said river, which them and their posterity are to enjoy forever.” The treaty was signed by the British with their allies, the Six Nations, after the American Revolution. Despite being the largest reserve demographically in Canada, those nations now reside on less than 5 percent of this original territory after losing much of the territory to settlement of newcomers.

Today, this gathering place is home to many First Nations, Métis and Indigenous peoples from across Turtle Island. Acknowledging them reminds us of our important connection to this land where we live, learn and work. We recognize, honour and respect these nations as the traditional stewards of the lands and water on which Laurier is now present.







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## **Sustainability Program Management**

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Leadership Capacity	
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• Key Themes: Connections, Outreach, Engagement	
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# UNIVERSITY CONTEXT

**Wilfrid Laurier University** has made significant strides in its sustainability standing and is now recognized as an institutional leader in sustainability. Established in 2010 because of an active and concerned group of students, the Laurier Sustainability Office is now an organized group that provides measurable value — financial and process savings, compliance to legislation and other mandates, and significant institutional recognition. Embedding sustainability in the short, medium, and long-term goals of the university has equipped the institution to respond to existing issues and emerging trends and opportunities.

The Sustainability Office has baselined and benchmarked campus sustainability indicators to understand progress to date and inform the creation of action-oriented responses outlined in this Plan. Two major assessments were completed using the Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education (AASHE) self-reporting Sustainability, Tracking, Assessment and Rating System (STARS) framework. Laurier achieved a Bronze rating in 2010 and advanced to a Silver rating in late 2013. The Sustainability Office is currently undertaking the third STARS assessment of Laurier's campuses, which will be completed in the fall of 2018. Additionally, the Sustainability Office participated in a lengthy stakeholder engagement process to gather key information from the Laurier community regarding this Plan.

Based on the feedback received, the Sustainability Office developed a strong understanding the state of sustainability on campus and in the post-secondary education sector, in addition to the sustainability goals of the Laurier community. Building on this, the Sustainability Office created a plan that represents Laurier's own unique vision while embracing its strengths and confront its weaknesses. The feedback received from the Laurier community made it clear that the overall goal of this plan must be to improve well-being by strengthening sustainability in everyday educational, operational and community processes (see figures on following pages). Achieving this goal will be accomplished through key strategic direction, as well as a comprehensive plan for sustainability on campus and beyond for the next five years.



# SUSTAINABILITY

## Evolution at Laurier

**2018:** Laurier publishes a new five-year Sustainability Action Plan 2018-2022.

**2016:** Laurier achieves total GHG reduction of 35% tCO<sub>2</sub>e / ft<sup>2</sup> compared to 2009 baseline.

**2016:** Laurier achieves public GHG reduction target of 25% tCO<sub>2</sub>e / ft<sup>2</sup> as a pledging member of Sustainable Waterloo Region's Regional Sustainability Initiative.

**2009:** the Sustainability Office is created as a result of the hard work of Laurier students led to the passing of a referendum question at the Wilfrid Laurier University Students' Union election.

**2010:** the Sustainability Office officially opens and first employee is hired.

**2010:** completion of first AASHE STARS rating, achieving Bronze.

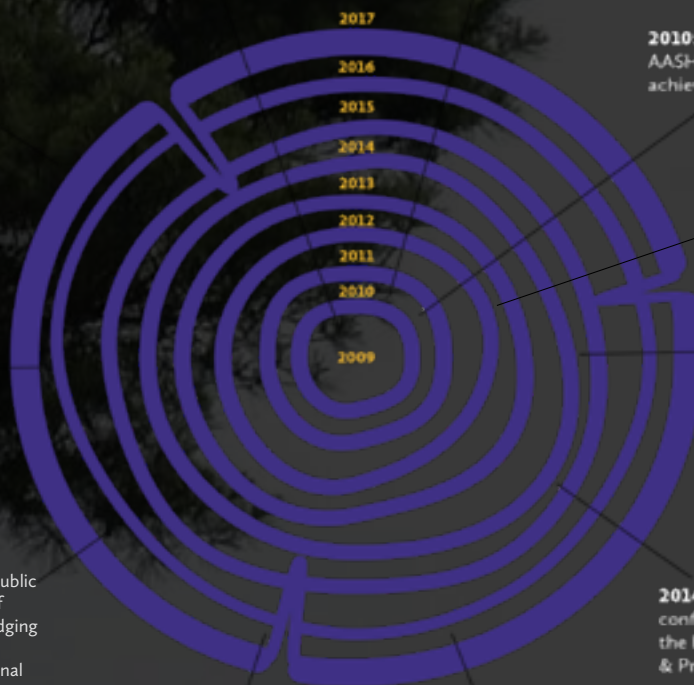
**2012:** Laurier publishes it's first five-year Sustainability Action Plan 2012-2016.

**2014:** completion of second AASHE STARS rating, achieving Silver.

**2014:** additional funding is confirmed and allows for the hiring of an Outreach & Program Coordinator.

**2016:** Laurier achieves internal GHG reduction target of 15% tCO<sub>2</sub>e / ft<sup>2</sup>.

**2016:** the Office grows further with the addition of an Energy Manager.

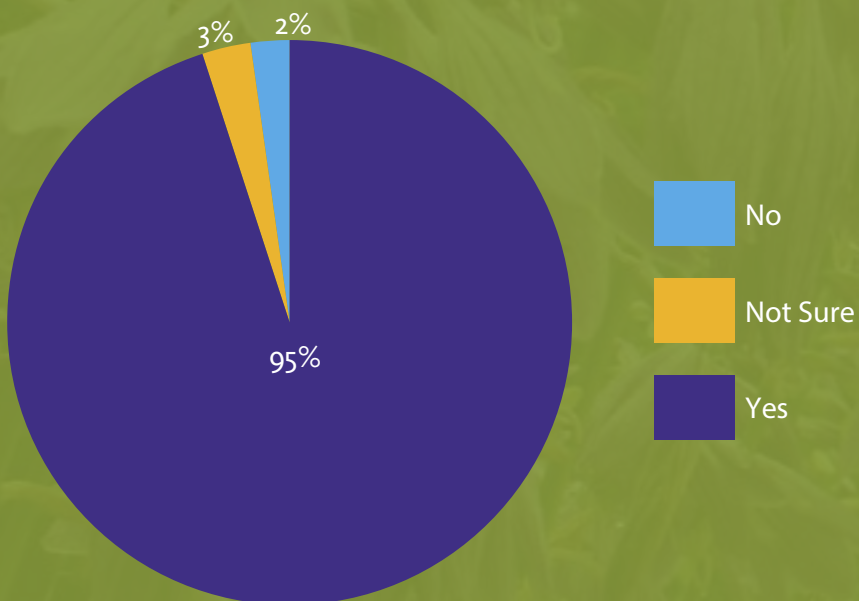




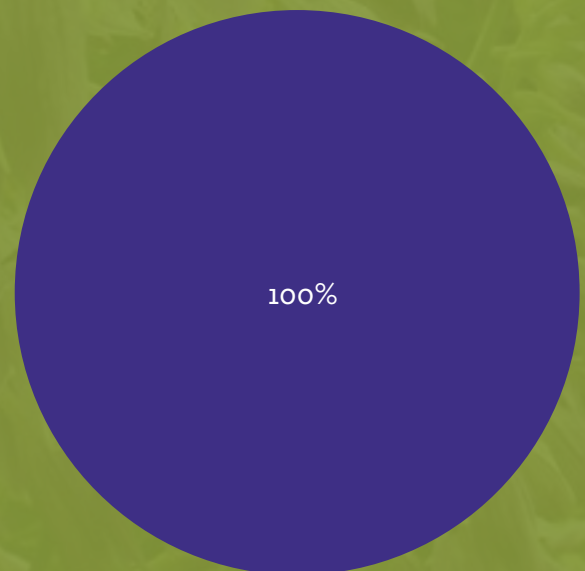
## Sustainability & Well-being

The stakeholder consultation process demonstrated that the Laurier community values well-being as an essential aspect of sustainability and focus in our planning and operations.

Do you believe a more sustainable campus and community add to your personal health and well-being?



Do you believe it is important to live in a sustainable way?





## Definitions of Sustainability

The term sustainability refers to the preservation of environmental, economic, and social well-being for ourselves as well as future generations. Sustainability is not just environmentalism. Embedded in most definitions of sustainability, there is also a focus on social issues and economic development.

At Laurier, the scope of sustainability involves education, operations and community partnerships. Education ranges from formal programming and academics to outreach and awareness raising. Operations spans planning, design and construction, as well as facilities and business operations. Community partnerships includes both internal and external relationships with stakeholders in our community.

## ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

Refers to the health of the Earth's natural (and free) resources, including geology, soil, air, water and all living organisms.

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## ECONOMIC SUSTAINABILITY

Refers to the conservation and management of existing resources through optimal means to achieve a responsible and beneficial balance over the long term.

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## SOCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

Including culture and knowledge, refers to social and related environmental justice issues, such as access to healthy and affordable resources.



# PLAN & POLICY FRAMEWORK

This Action Plan is embedded within a comprehensive framework of university plans and policies to ensure alignment with and support for the university-defined goals: advance academic excellence, expand experiential learning and enhance diversity. Laurier's Strategic Academic Plan and Campus Master Plan provided crucial context for developing the goals in this Action Plan and will guide in its implementation.

Throughout 2018 and 2019, Laurier will develop a new and ambitious Carbon Reduction Roadmap and Energy Management Plan. Together, the Sustainability Action Plan and Carbon Reduction Roadmap and Energy Management Plan will outline Laurier's short, medium and long-term greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions reduction strategies and targets in alignment with Laurier's overarching sustainability goal: achieve a low-carbon or carbon neutral campus and sustainable energy resiliency by 2050.

The Sustainability Office prepared this Action Plan to correspond with the global vision set by the United Nations through the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Through teaching and research,





Laurier plays a critical role in preparing the next generation of leaders who can contribute to the achievement of the SDGs by 2030. Universities play a vital part in finding solutions to increasingly complex global problems and pioneering technological innovations through their own operations to set an example for others.

Creation of this Action Plan was also guided by key issues of external compliance with governmental regulations, advancing sustainability within academics and furthering our commitment to socially responsible investing.

Finally, the direction and focus of this Action Plan was shaped by the Laurier community through extensive stakeholder consultation and a thorough review of trends in higher education.

See the Appendix for more details on plan and policy framework.



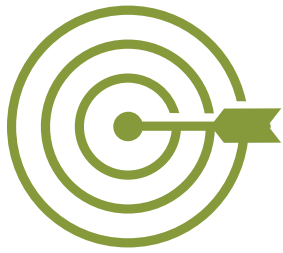


# Performance Measurement & Communications



# INDICATORS OF SUCCESS

The new 5-year Action Plan's objectives will be associated with specific actions and metrics of success that will include:



## GOAL

Overall objective we want to achieve



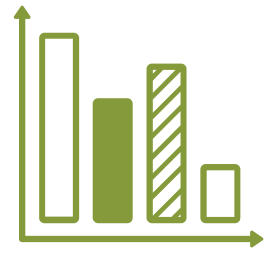
## ACTION

Specific measures to be planned and implemented in order to achieve the goal



## TIMELINE

Timeline over which the action should be achieved



## INDICATORS

How success will be measured — qualitative or quantitative, including a baseline year to measure against

# MEASUREMENT & COMMUNICATIONS

**Measurement Tools** Many indicators of success will be qualitative and can be measured through surveys, social media metrics, and interviews. Quantitative metrics items such as GHG emissions, energy and water usage can be measured using data obtained from sub-meters and monthly utility bills. Audits, such as our annual waste audit, will be used to measure our waste reduction and diversion rate.

**Milestones** This Action Plan spans five years, therefore goals and actions will be achievable in the short to medium-term. Short term actions will take place in the first two years and medium term actions will be undertaken in years three to five.

**Program Reporting & Evaluation** The Sustainability Office reports annually on progress to a variety of stakeholders, including Laurier's Building & Properties Committee, Laurier's Board of Governors and Sustainable Waterloo Region's Regional Sustainability Initiative. The Office also reports annually to the Council of Ontario Universities' Going Greener Report (projects completed) and Environment and Climate Change Canada (annual GHG emissions and energy and water usage).







# GOALS AND ACTIONS

The focus of this Sustainability Action Plan is to create a culture of sustainability at Laurier and beyond throughout our **academics, research, physical operations, outreach and community partnerships** to **achieve key sustainability goals**. In doing so, this Action Plan **contributes** to the **strategic goals of the university**. The Action Plan focuses on the following three themes: human and ecosystem health and well-being, climate action and social sustainability.

This Action Plan was created using inputs from a variety of sources to best reflect the objectives of the university. Feedback from the intensive stakeholder engagement and AASHE's STARS criteria and results were taken into consideration. Key guiding documents were reviewed, including Laurier's Strategic Academic Plan, the Diversity & Equity Office's Strategic Plan, past annual Sustainability Reports and peers' sustainability action plans was completed.

Analysis of external trends revealed that institutions are being driven to focus on significant decarbonization, primarily through the areas of energy, infrastructure, transportation and waste. As previously discussed, a separate Carbon Reduction Roadmap will be created to focus our efforts in this area. The Roadmap





will guide Laurier through the process of significantly reducing its carbon footprint over the long term by enacting bold programs and deploying new and innovative technologies. The shorter term plan detailed here will position Laurier to achieve emissions reduction by establishing key parameters and foundations to transition toward a low-carbon institution.

The feedback received from the Laurier community also pointed towards the importance of including goals related to social sustainability and its interconnectedness to environmental health and well-being. Because of these strong linkages and the importance placed on these issues by Laurier stakeholders, social sustainability will be a strong focus in the Action Plan.

Finally, the United Nation's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are used as a framework for the goals in this plan. By aligning this plan to the SDGs (see Appendix for more on the SDGs), the Sustainability Office will ensure the work being undertaken at Laurier is contributing towards the progress of human well-being and ecological integrity on a global scale; the true embodiment of "act local, think global."





# OPERATIONS



Through the following initiatives, the overarching operational goal over the next five years is to reduce our greenhouse gas emissions by **15 percent by 2022 (based on 2009 levels).**





# OPERATIONS

## CLIMATE

### 01 GOAL

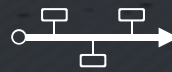


Continue to reduce GHG emissions across Laurier campuses through the completion of the LEEP project, building a low carbon campus in Milton and undertaking other projects as funding opportunities arise

#### ACTIONS



#### TIMELINE



#### INDICATORS



1. Create a Carbon Reduction Roadmap setting short-term, mid-term and long-term GHG reduction targets, and detailing the process of how targets will be achieved.	Short-term	Completion of plan
2. Establish a senior committee of key Laurier stakeholders to participate in the development of a Carbon Reduction Roadmap.	Mid-term	Number of leaders involved
3. Establish mechanism for regular communication of carbon emissions to business units.	Mid-term	Percent GHG reduction in each unit
4. Prepare for funding opportunities as they arrive by establishing a portfolio of "shovel ready" GHG reduction projects.	Short-term	Number of projects established



# OPERATIONS

## ENERGY & WATER

### 02 GOAL

Improve energy and water conservation across campus and contribute to deferred maintenance



#### ACTIONS



#### TIMELINE



#### INDICATORS



1. Implement the Laurier Energy Efficiency Project (LEEP) across campuses.	Mid-term	Energy & water reduction metrics (m <sup>3</sup> , kWh, tCO <sub>2</sub> e)
2. Create an Energy Management Plan that aligns with Carbon Reduction Roadmap GHG reduction targets.	Short-term	Completion of plan
3. Regularly measure and verify energy and water usage based on established protocols.	Ongoing	Checklist demonstrating tasks are completed on a regular basis
4. Develop building energy benchmarking capabilities and key performance indicators (KPIs).	Ongoing	Benchmarking and KPIs
5. Establish and implement capital planning design standards for new and existing energy and water consuming equipment/systems. Use checklists for ongoing verification of energy efficient operation of buildings and equipment.	Mid-term	Number of completed design standards  Standard Operating Procedures Checklists
6. Realize energy savings through continued expansion of Building Automation System (BAS) technologies and retro-commissioning of existing building systems.	Ongoing	Energy reduction metrics (m <sup>3</sup> , kWh, tCO <sub>2</sub> e)

Aligns with SDG 7: Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all





# OPERATIONS

## TRANSPORTATION



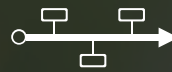
### 03 GOAL

Increase sustainable transportation uptake by students, faculty and staff to reduce single occupancy vehicle use by 5 percent

#### ACTIONS



#### TIMELINE



#### INDICATORS



- |   |            |  |
|---|------------|--|
| 1. Fill in gaps and expand service types, such as an improved carpool program, bike share program and electric vehicle charging station infrastructure across all our campuses. | Short-term | Percent change in alternative travel modes (from Single Occupancy Vehicle) |
| 2. Incentivize sustainable transportation options to encourage uptake through a variety of measures, such as preferential EV parking and discounted carpool parking.            | Mid-term   | Percent change in alternative travel modes (from single occupancy vehicle) |
| 3. Partner with government and non-profit organizations to improve scope of programs.   | Ongoing    | Number of partnerships formed  |





# OPERATIONS TRANSPORTATION

## 04 GOAL

Improve the sustainability of the university's fleet of vehicles to improve efficiency and reduce carbon emissions

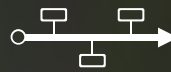


### ACTIONS



1. Pilot electric and hybrid vehicles in our Facilities and Asset Management department fleet and use as case studies for the rest of the campus' fleet vehicles.
2. Right-size university fleet and embed fleet-management systems and protocol to improve transportation demand management items like anti-idling and route optimization.

### TIMELINE



Short-term

Mid-term

### INDICATORS



Number of fleet outfitted

Gallons of fuel saved

GHG emissions reduced

Aligns with SDG 9: Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation



# OPERATIONS

## WASTE



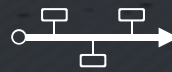
### 05 GOAL

Reduce overall amount of waste produced on the university by five percent and increase the waste diversion rate by 10 percent

#### ACTIONS



#### TIMELINE



#### INDICATORS



1. Improve awareness of waste reduction/diversion programs through incentives, events and better advertising.	Short-term	Number of new channels Percent increase of participation Waste diversion rate
2. Improve operation of waste reduction/diversion programs through orientation and ongoing training and evaluation.	Mid-term	Percent uptake and improvement in programs
3. Improve waste infrastructure across campus (e.g. standardized centralized waste stations, signage, moloks, etc.) to support improved waste diversion rates.	Mid-term	Percent uptake and improvement in programs
4. Expand reuse programs, for example surplus furniture, zero waste pop up shop, and residence move out program	Mid-term	Waste diversion rate

# OPERATIONS

## FOOD & DINING

### 06 GOAL

Improve sustainable food systems in formal and informal campus services



#### ACTIONS



1. Work with on-campus food service providers on common initiatives, such as increasing local food purchasing/percentage, focusing on plant-based meals and reducing food waste and packaging.
2. Increase the number of ways students and staff can access and purchase local foods.
3. Establish a formal program around our edible tree and shrub plantation.

#### TIMELINE



Mid-term

Short-term

Short-term

#### INDICATORS



Percent of increase in available local foods

Percent increase in local and plant based foods

Number of avenues available

Number of people involved

Volume of produce

Aligns with SDG 2: End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture





# OPERATIONS

## GROUND



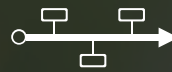
### 07 GOAL

Achieve a system of sustainable open and natural spaces throughout campus, prioritizing pedestrians and a positive, thriving relationship between the built and natural environment

#### ACTIONS



#### TIMELINE



#### INDICATORS



1. Formalize and publish sustainable grounds design standards that support native and low-maintenance plants and wild pollinating species.	Short-term	Published standards
2. Prioritize planting and maintenance of pollinator friendly plants and habitat to support wild bee populations, particularly those considered vulnerable or at risk.	Ongoing	Percent of campus covered
3. Prioritize creation and maintenance of green spaces, pedestrian spaces and linages, including walkways and gathering areas.	Ongoing	Percent of campus covered
4. Develop and partner with programs that support healthy ecosystems and human wellness, such as Bee City Canada, Greenbelt Fund and horticultural therapy.	Short-term	Number of new natural environment programs

15



Aligns with SDG 15: Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss

The background of the page is a soft-focus photograph of green grass. A solid green horizontal banner is positioned across the middle of the image, containing the word 'ACADEMICS' in white, bold, sans-serif capital letters.

# ACADEMICS



# ACADEMICS

## CURRICULUM



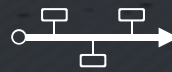
### 08 GOAL

Improve Laurier students' skills and knowledge about sustainability by providing sustainability resources and opportunities to Laurier's teaching community and to students directly

#### ACTIONS



#### TIMELINE



#### INDICATORS



1. Work with Teaching and Learning and faculty to provide resources to support embedding sustainability content into courses.	Short-term	Number of faculty and courses embedding sustainability
2. Support expansion of environment and sustainability-related academic programs offered at Laurier through focused programming at Milton campus.	Mid-term	Number of programs
3. Connect students to internal and external learning opportunities through class and other partnerships, Sustainability Office events and communications.	Short-term	Number of people participating
4. Partner with Office of Indigenous Initiatives on sustainability initiatives to provide learning opportunities for students on topics such as land-based programs.	Mid-term	Number of initiatives

# ACADEMICS RESEARCH

## 09 GOAL

Improve collaboration between the Sustainability Office and Laurier research programs that focus on the environment and sustainability



### ACTIONS



1. Use Sustainability Office communications to profile research and individuals achieving excellence in academics at Laurier within the field of sustainability.
2. Work with Laurier researchers to support Sustainability Office initiatives/strategies/programs and explore opportunities to use the university's campuses as 'living labs', particularly through environmental science and engineering programs at the new Milton campus.

### TIMELINE



Short-term

Ongoing

### INDICATORS



Number of profiles shared

Number of quality collaborative projects undertaken

Aligns with SDG 4: Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all







# ENGAGEMENT

# ENGAGEMENT

## CAMPUS ENGAGEMENT

### 10 GOAL

Further the goals of the Strategic Academic Plan as they relate to sustainability

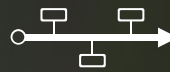


#### ACTIONS



1. Seek executive leadership from deans to support and drive partnerships with faculty and student-focused programs, as well as clubs and research centres, to provide experiential learning opportunities for students.
2. Develop outreach activities for the Sustainable Hawk Fund that support entrepreneurship and social innovation.

#### TIMELINE



Short-term

Short-term

#### INDICATORS



Number of new partnerships and initiatives

Number of projects focusing on entrepreneurship/social innovation

Aligns with SDG 4: Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all







# PLANNING & ADMINISTRATION

# PLANNING & ADMINISTRATION

## COORDINATION & PLANNING

### 11 GOAL

Create and update standards and toolkits to embed sustainability in planning, design, and construction (PDC), facilities operations and Human Resources onboarding activities



#### ACTIONS



#### TIMELINE



#### INDICATORS



- |   |            |   |
|---|------------|---|
| 1. Embed sustainability criteria in contracts and procedures for project managers and facilities operators to ensure that sustainability criteria are incorporated within projects and operations.  | Short-term | Number of projects and procedures with embedded sustainability criteria |
| 2. Include sustainability-related information and ongoing training in existing standards, practices, and programs within the preexisting staff sustainability certificate and new hire orientation. | Mid-term   | Employee awareness and buy-in to programs                               |
| 3. Advise on existing and emerging external sustainability-related legislation, funding opportunities, and other mandates.  | Ongoing    | Dollars of funding awarded  |

Aligns with SDG 9: Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation





# DIVERSITY, EQUITY & INCLUSION

# DIVERSITY, EQUITY & INCLUSION

## 12 GOAL

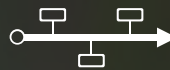
Support the mission and vision of leaders across campus with strong linkages to sustainability [e.g., Office of Indigenous Initiatives, and Indigenous Student Centres (ISC), and Diversity and Equity Office]



### ACTIONS



### TIMELINE



### INDICATORS



1. Create a formal communications network between stakeholders to improve the reach of shared messages, initiatives and events.	Short-term	Number of networks established
2. Include ISC and Laurier's diversity, equity and inclusion goals as themes in existing and new sustainability programming and services offerings, i.e., Staff Sustainability Certificate.	Short-term	Number of offerings outfitted with message
3. Have Sustainability staff and students attend ISC and diversity, equity and inclusion training, educational sessions and read guidebook; include ISC and Laurier's diversity, equity and inclusion resources in Sustainability Office resource materials.	Ongoing	Number of trainings attended Number of resources made available
4. Recruit diversity, equity and inclusion champions and ISC representatives for Laurier's Sustainable Campus Committee and include the representatives in screening for Sustainable Hawk Fund Projects.	Short-term	Number of groups participating
5. Partner with relevant groups and offices to support social sustainability-related workshops.	Mid-term	Number of workshops involved in

Aligns with SDG 10: Reduce inequality within and among countries

10 REDUCED INEQUALITIES





# DIVERSITY, EQUITY & INCLUSION



## 13 GOAL

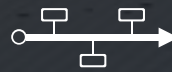
Improve cultural understanding and acceptance on campus by integrating diverse world views and histories.

### ACTIONS



1. Integrate Calls to Action from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Report into projects and events to work towards improving a more welcoming campus for Indigenous students, staff and faculty.
2. Integrate Indigenous principles and customs into managing Laurier's ecological and social systems, particularly in terms of connection to the land and ecosystem health.

### TIMELINE



Mid-term

Short-term

### INDICATORS



Number of programs with goals supporting reconciliation

Number of initiatives showcasing lessons

10 REDUCED INEQUALITIES



Aligns with SDG 10: Reduce inequality within and among countries

# DIVERSITY, EQUITY & INCLUSION

## 14 GOAL

Improve accessibility of sustainability services to people with disabilities



### ACTIONS



1. Encourage projects that confront accessibility issues through the Sustainable Hawk Fund.
2. Include the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) in the planning stages of Sustainability Office projects.

### TIMELINE



Short-term

Short-term

### INDICATORS



Number of projects funded

Number of projects with AODA staff engaged

Aligns with SDG 10: Reduce inequality within and among countries

10 REDUCED INEQUALITIES







# AFFORDABILITY

# AFFORDABILITY

## 15 GOAL

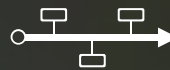
Provide opportunities (particularly for students) to access services and experiences for free or at affordable rates.



### ACTIONS



### TIMELINE



### INDICATORS



1. Continue to offer and promote programs and events at no cost, such as Sustainable Hawk Fund and Sustainable Waterloo Region educational workshops.	Ongoing	Number of people involved
2. Increase availability of reused and repurposed materials and items on campus, such as surplus furniture and gently used IT equipment, through a reuse program.	Short-term	Percent increase in waste diversion
3. After collecting items during Move-Out Program, redistribute furniture, household and clothing items at low-cost or no cost for students through a Free Store.	Short-term	Amount of inventory



The background image is a close-up photograph of a solar panel array. In the foreground, a metal mounting bracket with two silver-colored bolts is visible, attached to a blue-tinted solar panel. The panel has a grid-like texture. In the background, several other solar panels are visible, mounted on a sloped surface, receding into the distance under a clear sky.

# INVESTMENT & FINANCE

# INVESTMENT & FINANCE

## RESPONSIBLE INVESTING

### 16 GOAL

Implement recommendations made by the Responsible Investment Working Group (RIWG) to support meaningful action on climate change while meeting fiduciary duties of the Board of Governors



#### ACTIONS



#### TIMELINE



#### INDICATORS



- |   |          |   |
|---|----------|---|
| 1. Work with responsible parties to enhance Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) risk management strategies through mechanisms outlined in RIWG report, such as revising relevant investment policies, procedures and terms of reference to include ESG factors into decision-making. | Mid-term | Relevant policies<br>Procedures<br>Terms of References updated to reflect ESG factors |
| 2. Work with Financial Resources and Development and Alumni Relations to develop a fossil fuel free and impact investing endowment fund available to donors.  | Mid-term | Fossil fuel free endowment fund created   |

Aligns with SDG 13: Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts







## SUSTAINABILITY PROGRAM MANAGEMENT

Generally, a comprehensive plan provides the necessary strategy to be successful in managing the implementation and day-to-day operations of a program. Often the components of program management are not fully considered, integrated or followed. This can undermine the efforts and success of a plan. The principles on the following page are part of the REFOCUS approach, which provides guidance for developing a transformative program specific to sustainability. Wilfrid Laurier University, The University of Waterloo and Ryerson University were all part of a 2016 REFOCUS pilot project that reviewed the effectiveness of past sustainability programs. The Sustainability Office will work to embed three principles in our strategic planning and day-to-day operations to achieve effective program management and success.

# THREE PRINCIPLES OF STRATEGIC PROGRAM MANAGEMENT

## LEADERSHIP CAPACITY

The way an organization makes key decisions and runs its operations is essential for both success and buy-in. At a university, stakeholder participation is necessary to gather input from our diverse community so that we are not making decisions in silos, which is an important principle followed in this plan. The goal of this plan must reflect the goals of the university to be successful. As discussed in previous sections, the field of sustainability is broad. The plan encompasses a wide array of disciplines, topics and approaches. In light of the broad focus of sustainability, the Sustainability Office plays a key role in the overall leadership and planning of sustainability related efforts at the university. The approach implemented must remain broad to include all interdependent elements of social, environmental and economic sustainability.

*Key Themes: Strategy, Community, Systems Thinking*

## CHANGE MANAGEMENT

Key goals and successes of our sustainability program have been cross-campus coordination and communications on sustainability issues, as well as connecting our campuses to local and global trends. Increasingly, these trends include funding opportunities, particularly from the government. Therefore it is essential that we have the expertise and projects ready to respond. Similarly, sustainability in learning is contextually relevant, now more than ever. Together, these factors provide many opportunities for development in both the operational and academic sides of the institution.

Considering this, the Sustainability Office will continue its work providing strategic direction to the university on key societal and institutional trends in sustainability and will work to engage the leadership group further, to ensure representation and a comprehensive lens for decision making. The office will continue emphasizing sustainability outreach and awareness efforts by informing, consulting, collaborating with and empowering the Laurier community. Bolstering an understanding of our efforts and general sustainability trends will result in further buy-in and commitment.

*Key Themes: Connections, Outreach, Engagement*

## MEASUREMENT CAPACITY

Whether metrics are qualitative or quantitative, the ability to measure and communicate results, successes and failures of programs is important. Proper measurement and communication contributes to participation, recognition, buy-in, improvement and impact. Strong measurement capacity is particularly important for sustainability programs in which there is still some ambiguity around both their application at the organizational level and across the standard practices of the industry.

The Sustainability Office uses metrics on the strategic level, within action plans such as this, as well as through engagement statistics, annual material audits, daily energy usage and more. These practices have demonstrated financial, compliance and reputational benefits from sustainability programs.

*Key Themes: Indicators, Frameworks, Reporting*



# APPENDIX

LAZAR

RIDIS HALL





# ACTION PLAN DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

Assessing the current state of sustainability is vital for objective and meaningful strategic planning. The Sustainability Office's assessment process included qualitative and quantitative measures to evaluate our current performance and future potential. The process, outlined in the following sections, allowed us to understand Laurier's culture and administrative functioning, as well as operational materials and energy flows, preparing us to establish robust goals and action items.

## Stakeholder Engagement Timeline

Jan - Feb  
2016

Engagement strategy  
planning with larger Social  
Innovation and Venture  
Creation (SIVC) group

Feb - Mar  
2016

Sustainability leaders  
meetings

\* Senior Executive Officer, Centre for Teaching Innovation and Excellence, Diversity and Equity Office, Vice President Academic's Council, Social Innovation & Venture Creation, Wilfrid Laurier University Students' Union





### Consultation

Laurier's Sustainability Office participated in a series of stakeholder outreach events over a one year period in order to guide the direction and focus of the plan. Firstly, a meeting was convened comprised of the most active sustainability leaders on campus, including students, staff and faculty, before hosting an open invitation to the public via design labs which were facilitated by SIVC at the Waterloo and Brantford campuses. During the subsequent summer months, the Sustainability Office launched a social media campaign to advertise the feedback survey to further inform the Sustainability Action Plan. A feedback survey was also promoted as part of stakeholder engagement. Finally, key stakeholder groups were consulted, many through a series of meetings, in order to solicit feedback from Laurier groups that are invested in sustainability.

#### Stakeholder groups consulted:

- The Centre for Teaching Innovation & Excellence
- The Vice President's Advisory Council (VPAC) group
- The Indigenous Student Centre
- The Diversity & Equity Office
- Wilfrid Laurier University Students' Union (WLUSU)
- Brantford Senior Executive Officer (SEO)
- Facilities and Asset Management
- Parking & Transportation Resources

Mar  
2016

Open 'community conversations' visioning meeting led by SIVC on Waterloo and Brantford campuses

Jun - Sep  
2016

Summer term social media campaign: survey launched and sustainability leaders profiled

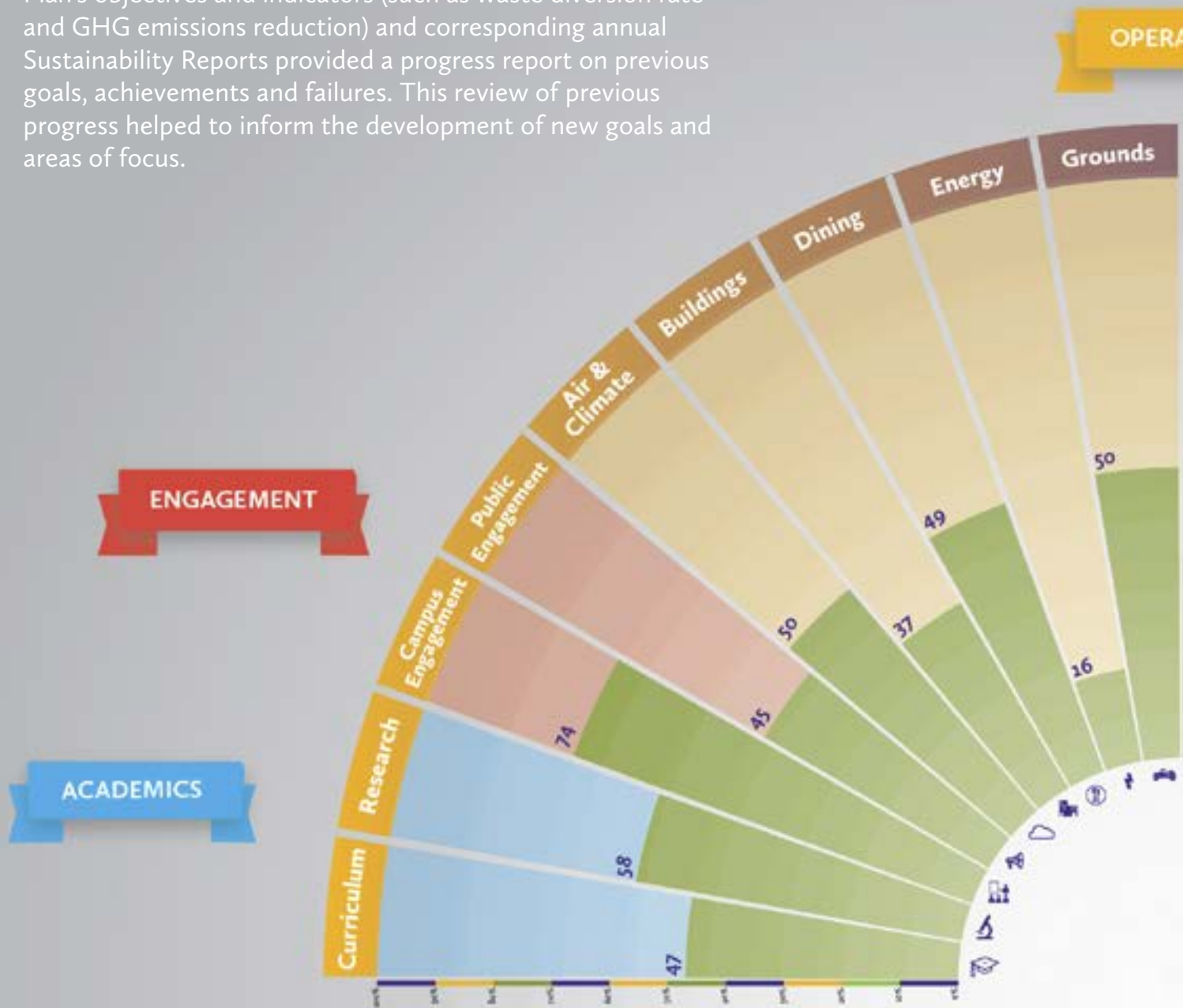
Nov 2016 -  
present

Targeted stakeholder meetings with key groups (SEO, CTIE, Indigenous Student Centre, VPAC, DEO, Accessibility, SIVC, WLUSU, etc.)\*



## REVIEW OF ASSESSMENT TOOLS

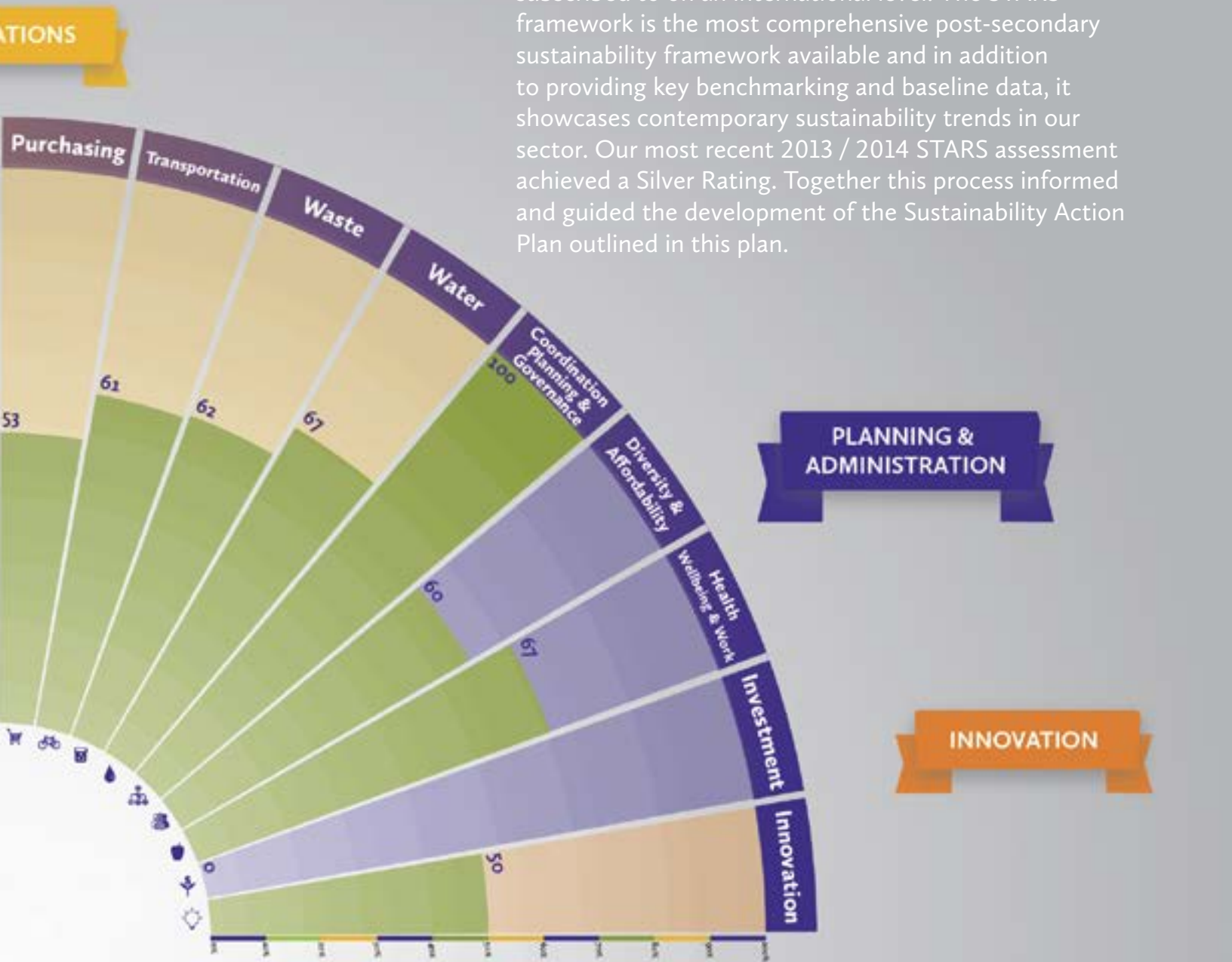
Assessment tools were used to measure the state of sustainability at Laurier. The previous Sustainability Action Plan's objectives and indicators (such as waste diversion rate and GHG emissions reduction) and corresponding annual Sustainability Reports provided a progress report on previous goals, achievements and failures. This review of previous progress helped to inform the development of new goals and areas of focus.



percent of points achieved

# LAURIER SUSTAINABILITY RATING

AASHE's Sustainability, Tracking, Assessment & Rating System (STARS) provides a comprehensive picture of college and university sustainability status, which is subscribed to on an international level. The STARS framework is the most comprehensive post-secondary sustainability framework available and in addition to providing key benchmarking and baseline data, it showcases contemporary sustainability trends in our sector. Our most recent 2013 / 2014 STARS assessment achieved a Silver Rating. Together this process informed and guided the development of the Sustainability Action Plan outlined in this plan.



percent of points achieved







## DETAILED PLAN AND POLICY FRAMEWORK

The Sustainability Office works to support the core mission and goals of the university, as directed by the Strategic Academic Plan (2015-2020). Projects organized and managed through the Office focus on improving and creating student services and success, while simultaneously contributing to a resilient organization and community. Academic excellence, experiential learning and diversity are the core pillars guiding us to 2022. Laurier has committed to these pillars in its Strategic Academic Plan. Sustainability efforts align naturally to three core pillars and the Sustainability Office will continue its contribution as reflected in the goals and action items outlined in this plan.





## Pillar 1

### **Advancing Academic Excellence:**

Identify academic programs (or sets of programs) that exemplify academic excellence and Laurier's strengths in experiential learning, pedagogical innovation and community engagement. Leverage these program strengths to build impact as a comprehensive university.

Sustain, leverage and enhance our sector-leading and differentiated academic programs.

## Pillar 2

### **Expanding Experiential Learning:**

Build an intentional structure of experiential learning connected to program learning outcomes, which are connected to the "communities of interest" critical to Laurier's graduates.

## Pillar 3

### **Enhancing Diversity:**

Build a diverse 21<sup>st</sup> century university by educating a larger proportion of students from outside the traditional cohort of Ontario high school graduates.





## CARBON REDUCTION & ENERGY MANAGEMENT PLAN

Laurier's existing Energy Management Plan was created in 2009 and is a reference point for our current and future efforts in carbon mitigation, energy efficiency, and deferred maintenance however, it is out of date. Throughout 2018 and 2019, we will be developing a new and ambitious Carbon Reduction Roadmap and Energy Management Plan that will outline our short, medium and long-term GHG emissions reduction targets.

## CAMPUS MASTER PLAN

Our most recent campus master plan confronts the challenges and opportunities of our urban campus, such as parking, connectivity and accessibility. Focusing on smart growth principles of intensification and adaptive reuse, the plan recognizes the need for progressive urban planning to create a strong and unique sense of place that focuses on the pedestrian.

## EXTERNAL COMPLIANCE

External compliance protocols have increased regularly over the last few years and now include annual requirements from the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change, Ministry of Energy, and the Council of Ontario Universities. We also voluntarily report on our GHG emissions reduction to the Sustainable Waterloo Region's Regional Sustainability Initiative.





## UNITED NATIONS SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

In September 2015, the United Nations adopted a set of goals to end poverty, protect the planet, and ensure prosperity and equity for all as part of a new sustainable development agenda. The seventeen Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) comprise a shared global vision and framework of sustainable development priorities to 2030. A critical role is played by universities in addressing global challenges and achieving the SDGs. Through teaching and research, universities have a responsibility to prepare the next generation of leaders to be able to understand and meet these global challenges. Universities also play a vital part in finding solutions to increasingly complex global problems and pioneering technological innovations through their own operations to set an example for others of social, economic, and environmental sustainability.

We are already seeing momentum in the area of SDGs from public, private and non-profit entities as a way to frame efforts of sustainable development and will join external initiatives further investigating the place of SDGs and how they may fit within the academic, operational and community scope of sustainability at Laurier.



# DEVELOPMENT AREAS

Also represented in our AASHE STARS results are two areas of focus for this Action Plan: academics and sustainable investments.

## 1 ACADEMICS

STARs criteria in the academic section are comprehensive and include sustainability in the curriculum, sustainability learning outcomes, undergraduate and graduate degree programs in sustainability, immersive experience programs, assessment of sustainability literacy, and incentives for developing sustainability courses. We would like to advance campus sustainability by creating partnerships between students, operational staff, and faculty. This collaboration will focus on innovative and impactful research projects and experiential learning opportunities. Students, faculty, staff and community partners will collaborate on projects that use campus as a living lab to advance Laurier's sustainability strategic plans and priorities.

## 2 SUSTAINABLE INVESTMENT

With socially responsible investing, STARS outlines measurement criteria for socially responsible investing, the key element of which is having an established and active committee on investor responsibility to advise the university on socially and environmentally responsible opportunities. STARS further recommends institutions use their authority to promote sustainable investing through policy and decision-making and providing a public investment disclosure of the institutions holdings. In 2016, the Board of Governors approved the formation of a Responsible Investment Working Group (RIWG) at Laurier following a recommendation from a group of faculty members that the university divest from fossil fuels. Following an extensive investigation, research and consultation period conducted by the RIWG, they recommended that the university take the following actions:

- Enhance Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) risk management strategies.
- Develop a responsible investment annual report.
- Develop a fossil free/impact investing endowment fund.
- Seek out and create collaborative relationships with other institutions to advance RI/ESG strategies.
- Continue to support research on the effects of climate change, the sustainability of ecosystems and ESG related issues.
- Continue to implement strategies to reduce carbon emissions on campus and promote the principles of sustainability.

It is worth noting that the RIWG's final recommendation of reducing carbon emissions supports the over-arching focus and goals of outlined in this Action Plan.





# Sustainability Action Plan 2012–2016

We have achieved many successes over the course of our previous Sustainability Action Plan that guided our efforts over the past few years. The key successes are highlighted here:

## GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

Laurier decreased its intensity-based greenhouse gas emissions by 32% (from 2009 levels) over the period of the previous Sustainability Action Plan. In large part, this was due to initiatives related to energy and waste and the province of Ontario's phase out coal-fired electricity generation.



## ENERGY

Laurier has undertaken the Laurier Energy Efficiency Project (LEEP) to improve energy efficiency and conservation through a partnership with an energy service company, whereby we pay for the project out of the energy savings it provides. Laurier has chosen to take a highly progressive approach to energy management, including common energy conservation measures such as upgrading to LEDs and installing weather stripping across much of our building stock to more advanced measures such as installing solar walls, solar photovoltaic arrays, and power storage in the form of large batteries. Laurier has also shown innovation in green building with LEED designated projects, most recently with the award winning Lazaridis School of Business and Economics.

## WASTE

Over the span of the last Action Plan, Laurier has made substantial efforts to improve waste diversion, implementing a centralized waste program across the entire Waterloo campus, as well as some key Brantford buildings. This has allowed us to achieve a 60% waste diversion rate at a multi-campus level.



# KEY SUCCESSES

## SUSTAINABILITY INVESTMENT MODELS



The Sustainable Hawk Fund, a SEED funding program, has provided significant financial contributions for student, staff and faculty-led projects that have improved sustainability services and contributed to the Laurier community in a positive way across our campuses.

## FAIRTRADE CAMPUS

We received the Fairtrade Campus designation from the Canadian Fair Trade Network (CFTN). Under the designation, all food outlets operated by Laurier and the Wilfrid Laurier University Students' Union in Brantford and Waterloo, including Laurier catering, serve fair trade certified coffee, and fair trade certified options for tea and chocolate bars.

## OPEN SPACE PROJECTS

The Sustainability Office secured funding through its operating budgets and through grants to add new open spaces and gathering places throughout campus, including tables, benches, bike storage, safe pedestrian linkages, natural plantings, gardens and art installations.

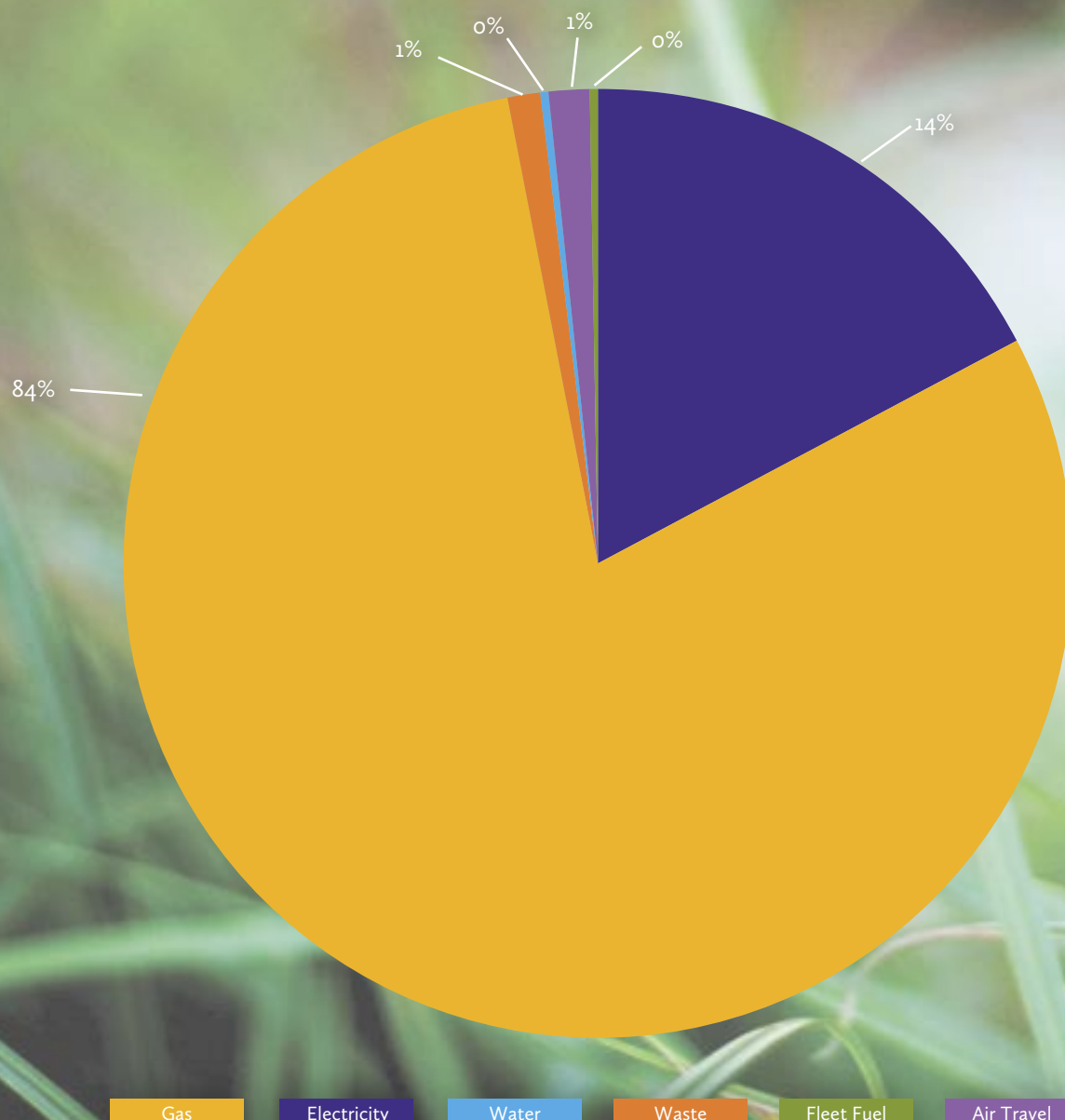




# GHG EMISSIONS SUMMARY 2012–2017

Wilfrid Laurier University has been tracking greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from operations (Scope 1, 2, and 3) since the base year of 2009. We measure and report emissions from the following sources: Natural Gas, Fleet Fuel, Electricity, Air Travel, Water, and Waste. We track our GHG emissions profile using both absolute (tCO<sub>2</sub>e) and intensity (tCO<sub>2</sub>e/ft<sup>2</sup>) metrics.

Below: our 2017 GHG emissions profile illustrates the source activity drivers behind our carbon footprint.



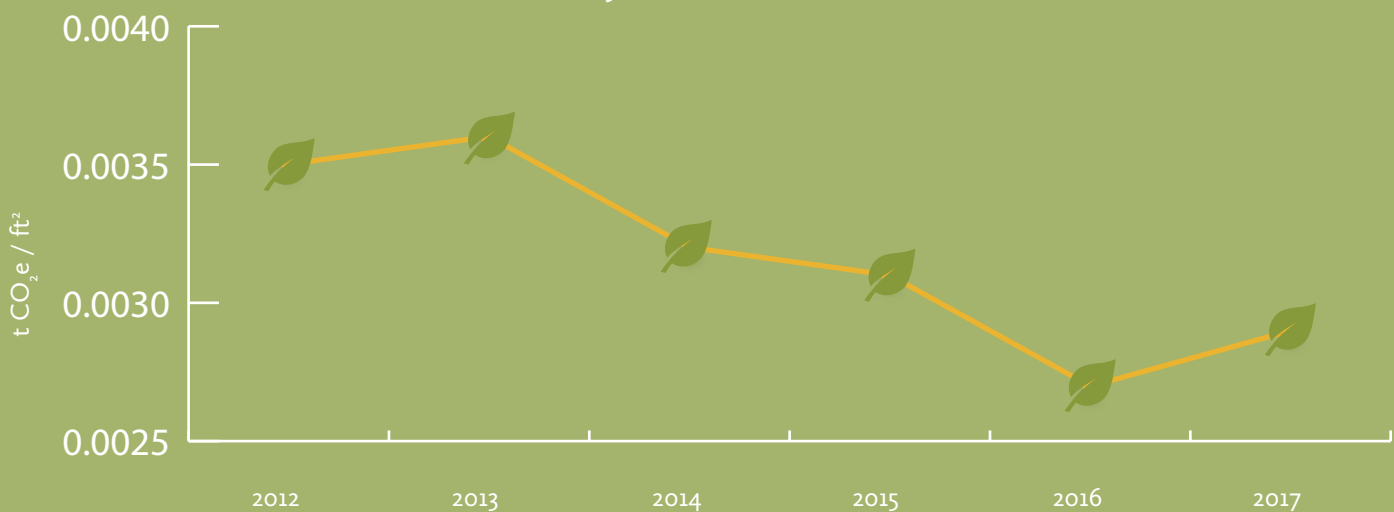
## Intensity GHG Reductions

Since 2012 we have seen a reduction in intensity-based GHG emissions (tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> equivalent per square foot) by 18.76%. When we compare to our 2009 baseline we have achieved a GHG reduction of 32.34%.

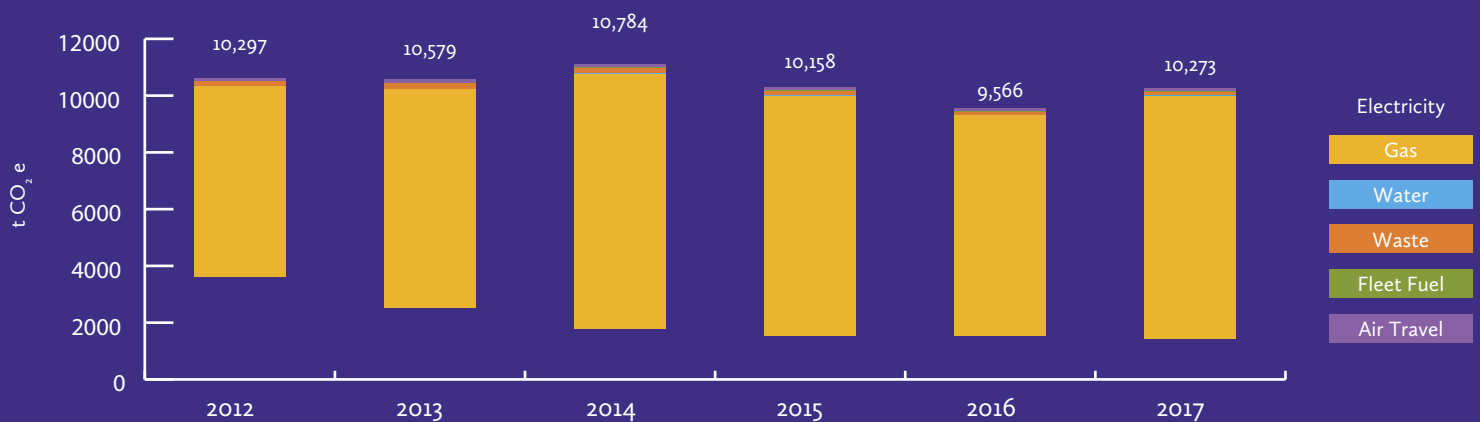
## Absolute GHG Reductions

Since 2012 we have seen a reduction in absolute GHG emissions (tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> equivalent) by 0.24%. When we compare to our 2009 baseline we have achieved a GHG reduction of 7.49%.

### Intensity GHG Reductions



### Absolute GHG Reductions







**WILFRID LAURIER UNIVERSITY**  
SUSTAINABILITY ACTION PLAN  
2018–2022

**LAURIER**   
*Inspiring Lives.*