

WILFRID LAURIER UNIVERSITY

Annual Sustainability Report

Sustainability Office

2020-2021

wlu.ca/sustainability



Land Acknowledgement



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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Introduction

Every year, Laurier has the opportunity to demonstrate how it is a leader in sustainability among post-secondary institutions. The Annual Sustainability Report is an opportunity to illustrate how the University's operations and initiatives help achieve short and long-term goals in the Sustainability Action Plan. By evaluating progress across the University each year, it enables the Sustainability Office and its partners to prioritize certain programs and projects.

The scope of this report includes all campus activities during the 2020-2021 academic year. This past year has proven to be a challenge, while offering opportunities to design and implement new programs. This report is broken down by the sections of the Sustainability Action Plan, including Operations, Academics, Engagement, Planning and Admin, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion and Investment. Overall, this report will highlight the progress made for each of these categories based on the 16 goals listed in the Sustainability Action Plan.

The Sustainability Action Plan uses the United Nation's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) as a framework to ensure Laurier's sustainability goals contribute to the progress of human well-being and ecological integrity on a global scale. Throughout this report, you will see how the University works towards its sustainability goals and objectives while contributing to the SDGs.



Highlights

- The first student achieved the [Living Planet Leader](#) Certificate through World Wildlife Fund (WWF), with 103 new students signing up for the program in 2020
- Had a successful gardening season at the Northdale garden with the hiring of a Garden Coordinator and [Young City Growers](#) interns, providing a Community Supported Agriculture program
- Total emissions for all campuses saw a decrease of 11.3% from 2019 to 2020, predominantly from a reduction of 1,000 tonnes of CO₂e from natural gas consumption
- The start of a WLUFAs Climate Action Committee, that will work to play a role in the University's achievement of climate targets
- The LEEP project had the majority of the power generation infrastructure installed in 2020 along with the completion of the generator building addition, which will result in reduced emissions and costs

Status of Goals

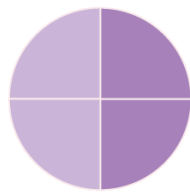
Throughout the report, the progress made toward achieving the Sustainability Action Plan (the Plan) goals are illustrated using the icons below. On the subsequent page, there is an overview of the status of the 16 goals listed in the Plan. Each goal has a status icon that will describe how far along the University is progressing toward achieving these goals.



NOT STARTED



STARTED



SOMEWHAT COMPLETE



MOSTLY COMPLETE/ ONGOING



COMPLETE

Summary of Progress

OPERATIONS

GOAL 1	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	
GOAL 2	Improve energy and water conservation across campus and contribute to deferred maintenance	
GOAL 3	Increase sustainable transportation uptake by students, faculty and staff to reduce single occupancy vehicle use by 5 percent	
GOAL 4	Improve the sustainability of the University's fleet of vehicles to improve efficiency and reduce carbon emissions	
GOAL 5	Reduce overall amount of waste produced on the University by five percent and increase the waste diversion rate by 10 percent	
GOAL 6	Improve sustainable food systems in formal and informal campus services	
GOAL 7	Achieve a system of sustainable open and natural spaces throughout campus, prioritizing pedestrians and a positive, thriving relationship between the built and natural environment	

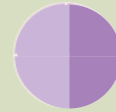
ACADEMICS

GOAL 8	Improve Laurier students' skills and knowledge about sustainability by providing sustainability resources and opportunities to Laurier's teaching community and to students directly	
GOAL 9	Improve collaboration between the Sustainability Office and Laurier research programs that focus on the environment and sustainability.	

ENGAGEMENT

GOAL 10

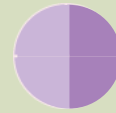
Further the goals of the Strategic Academic Plan as they relate to sustainability



PLANNING & ADMIN

GOAL 11

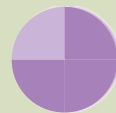
Create and update standards and toolkits to embed sustainability in planning, design, and construction (PDC), facilities operations and Human Resources onboarding activities



DIVERSITY, EQUITY & INCLUSION

GOAL 12

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]



GOAL 13

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



GOAL 14

Improve the accessibility of sustainability services to people with disabilities.



AFFORDABILITY

GOAL 15

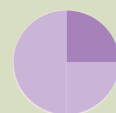
Provide opportunities (particularly for students) to access services and experiences for free or at affordable rates.



INVESTMENT & FINANCE

GOAL 16

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





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.

PROGRESS

Action 1: Create a Carbon Reduction Roadmap setting short-term, midterm and long-term GHG reduction targets and detailing the process of how targets will be achieved

Action 2: Establish a senior committee of key Laurier stakeholders to participate in the development of a Carbon Reduction Roadmap

Action 3: Establish mechanism for regular communication of carbon emissions to business units

Action 4: Establish a portfolio of “shovel ready” GHG reduction projects to be prepared for funding opportunities as they arise



LAUNCHING THE CARBON REDUCTION ROADMAP

The Carbon Reduction Roadmap with emissions reduction targets was presented to Laurier’s Board of Governors in early 2020. The project included the Sustainability Office and other Facilities and Asset Management team members working with Blackstone Energy Services to identify actions to achieve Laurier’s GHG reduction targets. With the Roadmap now underway, it’s time to begin completing projects and actions that will help achieve the GHG reduction targets of 15% by 2022, 40% by 2030, and a net-zero campus by 2050. The Roadmap includes four key pillars for Laurier to achieve its GHG reduction targets– Energy Conservation and Demand Management, Space Optimization and Zero Carbon Buildings, Facility and Fleet Electrification, and Renewable Energy. There are also several actions recommended for each pillar that will help achieve the GHG reduction targets.



Operations

CLIMATE

BRANTFORD COMMUNITY CLIMATE CHANGE ADVISORY TEAM



The City of Brantford launched a Community Climate Change Advisory Team at the end of 2020. The Sustainability Office will have one team member sit on this team, alongside school board representatives, health units, local utilities, and other business organizations. The main purpose of the team is to discuss community emissions in Brantford, ideas, solutions, resources, and partnerships that will help the City of Brantford move towards a net-zero community by 2050. The Sustainability Office will be actively participating in several sessions throughout 2021 to engage with other members and work towards a sustainable community in Brantford.

REDUCING EMISSIONS THROUGH RETROFITS

To further reduce campus energy demands and GHG emissions, design work began on the retrofit of the largest natural gas boiler heating plant located at the Dr. Alvin Woods Building on the Waterloo Campus. The boiler central plant also supplies the Fred Nichols Campus Centre (FNCC), Arts, Library, Student Services and Peters buildings. Retrofitting the approximately 60-year-old natural gas boilers, along with eliminating the Arts and Schlegel boiler plants, will reduce utility costs and GHG emissions, augment building automation and control, reduce maintenance costs, and improve user comfort. The expected electricity and natural gas savings is about 10%, with GHG emissions savings greater than 90 tonnes CO₂e annually. The final design was approved for tendering in the Fall of 2020 with construction expected to begin in April 2021.





Operations

CLIMATE

EMISSIONS INVENTORY

The emissions inventory for all campuses in 2020 included a sharp decrease in total emissions from 2019 by approximately 11.3% (Figure 2). In terms of emissions reductions from the baseline year of 2009, emissions have decreased by 18%, which indicates that the 2022 target has been achieved. However, with the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, the lack of students, staff, and faculty on campus impacting regular operations is likely the cause of this significant emissions reduction. The largest decrease was from Scope 1 emissions - natural gas - that saw an 11.2% reduction in emissions from 2019 (Figure 1). With future energy-savings projects planned for 2021 and beyond, there is potential for an emission reduction rebound, even when a return to campus occurs.

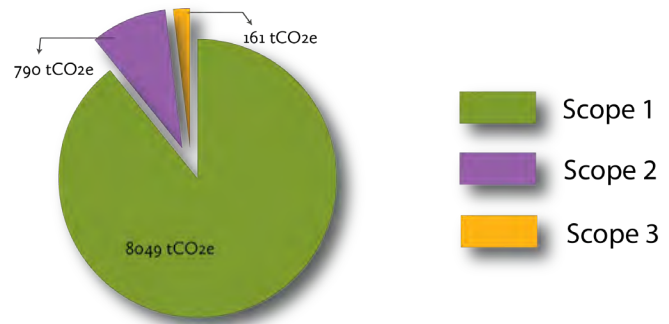


Figure 1. Total emissions for all campuses broken down into Scope 1 (natural gas and fleet), Scope 2 (electricity), and Scope 3 (waste, water and air travel) emissions

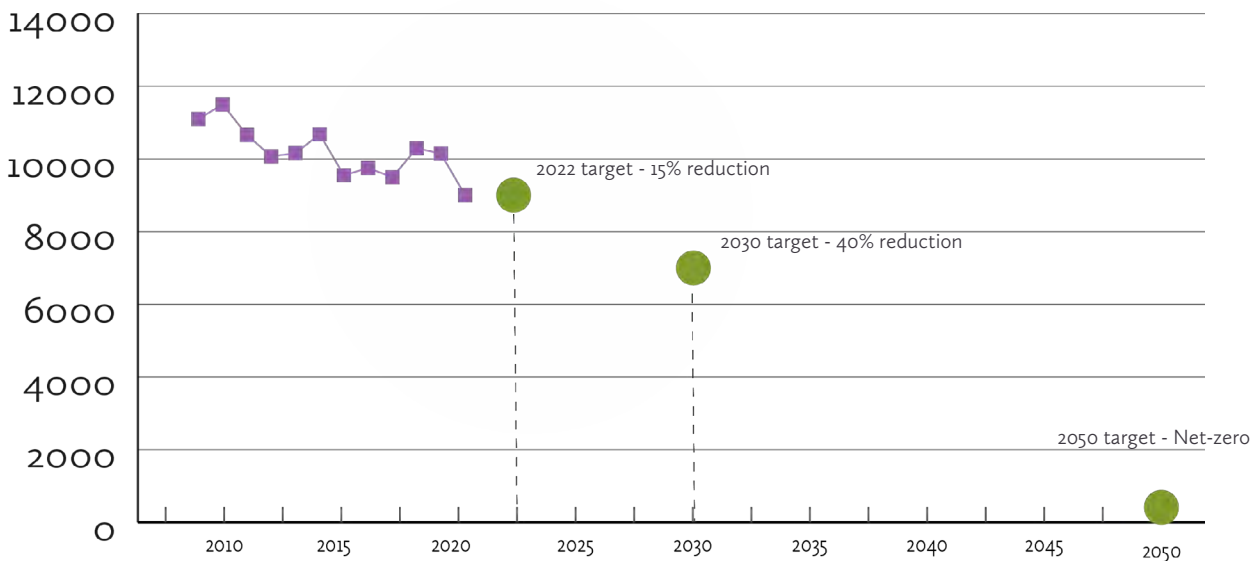


Figure 2. The total emissions for all Laurier campuses since 2009, in addition to the three targets for 2022, 2030, and 2050.



Operations

ENERGY & WATER

02 GOAL



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

PROGRESS

Action 1: Implement the Laurier Energy Efficiency Project (LEEP) across campuses

Action 2: Create an Energy Management Plan that aligns with Carbon Reduction Roadmap GHG reduction targets

Action 3: Regularly measure and verify energy and water usage based on established protocols

Action 4: Develop building energy benchmarking capabilities and key performance indicators (KPIs)

Action 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

Action 6: Realize energy savings through continued expansion of Building Automation System (BAS) technologies and retro-commissioning of existing building systems



COMPLETION OF ENERGY EFFICIENT UPGRADES

2020 was a busy year on the LEEP project, with the majority of the power generation infrastructure installed along with the completion of the generator building addition. The generator building is an addition to the existing Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) control building and battery container enclosure installed in an earlier project phase. With the new Caterpillar 2MW power generator now operational, and the completion of major upgrades to the campus high voltage electrical infrastructure, the final stages of micro-grid control programming, testing, and commissioning can begin.



Operations

ENERGY & WATER

Laurier's microgrid, when necessary, will have the flexibility to produce power via generation, or by dispatching power from a BESS. By using the micro-grid to control that BESS and power generator, Laurier can participate in provincial demand response programs, effectively eliminating the Waterloo campus Global Adjustment cost, which makes up approximately 75% of the electricity bill charges.

Since 2016, significant investments in rooftop photo-voltaic solar arrays and energy saving capital improvement measures such as lighting and HVAC equipment renewal have markedly reduced campus energy demands. These investments have resulted in a reduced design load for the micro-grid system and reduced campus operational costs and GHG emissions. Given a natural gas generator will be used for curtailing electrical demand during coincident provincial peaks – known as “peak shaving” – the increase in GHG emissions had to be reduced through investment in energy conservation and renewable sources of energy. Through the use of third party peak prediction software using artificial intelligence, it is expected that the generator up-time can be kept to less than 16 occurrences per year, making our net emissions reduction goal achievable. The BESS and generator along with the micro-grid is expected to be online by the summer of 2021.





Operations

TRANSPORTATION

03 GOAL



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

PROGRESS

Action 1: Fill gaps and expand service types such as an improved carpool program, bike share program, and electric vehicle charging station infrastructure across all our campuses

Action 2: Incentivize sustainable transportation options to encourage uptake through a variety of measures such as preferential EV parking and discounted carpool parking

Action 3: Partner with government and non-profit organizations to improve scope of programs



04 GOAL



Improve the sustainability of our campus fleet to improve efficiency and reduce carbon emissions.

PROGRESS

Action 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

Action 2: Right-size campus fleet and embed fleet management systems and protocol to improve transportation demand management items like anti-idling and route optimization





Operations

TRANSPORTATION

LAURIER LOOKING TO INCREASE ELECTRIC VEHICLE CHARGING STATIONS

Parking and Transportation Resources, alongside the Sustainability Office, partnered with the University of Waterloo's Sustainability Office to apply to the Zero Emission Vehicle Infrastructure Program. This grant program includes \$130 million of funding allocated between 2019 and 2024 to deploy a network for zero-emission vehicle charging and refueling stations. If successful, Laurier and UWaterloo's combined application would include \$100K in funding for 20 Level 2 charging stations between the two campuses. The project would include the installation of five EV charging stations at Laurier Waterloo campus and 15 stations at UWaterloo. This project would help fill in gaps with charging stations at both institutions and will promote the use of driving EVs to the campuses.



TRAVELWISE SURVEY: A SHIFT IN COMMUTING HABITS

The COVID-19 pandemic brought challenges while also introducing new opportunities to shift commuting behaviour. Every two years, the Sustainability Office, in partnership with [TravelWise](#) and the Region of Waterloo, conducts a commuting survey for staff and faculty. During a typical year with the TravelWise program, the Sustainability Office hosts a variety of booths, workshops, and events to promote sustainable transportation. Considering this year was unique with working from home, TravelWise launched a Region-wide survey to understand the way COVID-19 has affected commuting patterns.

Wilfrid Laurier University had 87 respondents from Kitchener-Waterloo that provided insight on their commuting behaviours. Approximately 58% of respondents reported that their primary commuting mode shifted during the pandemic. Of the 58%, majority previously drove alone and reported that they were either "neutral" or "satisfied" with their commute. When the pandemic started, of the 76% of respondents working from home, 50% were very satisfied with their commute and 31% remained neutral. Only one respondent reported being "very unsatisfied" with the working from home commute. Overall, respondents seemed to have a higher level of satisfaction with their commute working from home, compared to driving alone prior to the pandemic.



Operations

WASTE

05 GOAL



Reduce overall amount of waste produced on campus by 5% and increase the waste diversion rate by 10%.

PROGRESS

Action 1: Improve awareness of waste reduction/diversion programs through incentives, events and better advertising

Action 2: Improve operation of waste reduction/diversion programs through orientation and ongoing training and evaluation

Action 3: Improve waste infrastructure across campus (e.g. standardized centralized waste stations, signage, moloks, etc.) to support improved waste diversion rates

Action 4: Expand reuse programs, for example surplus furniture, zero waste pop up shop, and residence move out program



ZERO WASTE WEEK GOES VIRTUAL

The Sustainability Office hosted its last in-person events for 2020 during Zero Waste Week in March. Throughout the week there were several events including “Swap Don’t Shop,” a DIY personal care workshop, “Zero Waste 101,” and a mason jar challenge for students and staff to participate in. Over the course of the week over 500 students were engaged and 11 community partners participated.

During the Fall semester, the Sustainability Office hosted a virtual Zero Waste Week to keep the momentum going for waste reduction. This campaign aligned with the “Waste Reduction Week” campaign across Canada. There were five themes throughout the week from October 19th to October 23rd. The first day’s theme was “Intro to Zero Waste,” where participants began their mason jar challenge. This challenge required participants to use a 500-mL jar for all their non-compostable, non-recyclable waste throughout the week. The goal was to see if participants could fit all of their landfill waste in a jar. In the end, 30 participants signed up, sharing their progress on Instagram and getting entered in to win prizes!

Operations

WASTE



Day two consisted of a “Clothing and Fashion” theme, where Le Prix Fashion and Consulting did an Instagram takeover for the Sustainability Office’s online community. The owner – Robyn Hobbs – is a Laurier Alumna and has been a key supporter in Laurier’s sustainability efforts. During the Instagram takeover, Robyn completed a live Q&A session and even took participants on a virtual tour of the storefront. Another important aspect of waste reduction is e-waste, which was the theme for October 21st. Throughout the day students could participate in the e-waste trivia event to win one of five gift cards to Staples. Over 100 students participated in the trivia event!

Day four’s theme was Plastic. Most of the engagement continued online through the Sustainability Office’s Instagram channel. Throughout the afternoon, there was a social media giveaway, which challenged students to interact with a post by stating how they reduce their plastic waste. Over 30 students participated in the challenge and two won a zero waste prize bundle.

The final day of Zero Waste Week had a theme of “food waste.” In the afternoon, there was an online workshop for staff and students to listen to Susan Gentilcore, who owns the Waterloo-based business “All Things Preserved.” This session included “10 Easy Steps Towards a Zero Waste Lifestyle.” Just under 15 staff and students participated in the interactive workshop and shared how they embed zero waste in their own lives.

Operations

WASTE

WASTE REDUCTION PROGRESS

Over the past few years, Laurier has faced challenges in waste diversion since China’s 2018 ban on the import of most plastics and mixed papers due to contamination levels. In 2019, Waterloo’s diversion rate dropped from 49% in 2018 to 43%. This past year’s waste audit for 2020 concluded that 2020’s diversion rate dropped again to 24% (Figure 3). For the Brantford campus the waste diversion rate remained unchanged from 2019 to 2020 at 69% (Figure 4). Unfortunately, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, there has not been any additional educational or infrastructural improvements for waste diversion or reduction implemented on the campuses. Even with the challenges of increased landfill waste due the the pandemic, new and existing initiatives for waste reduction will be implemented when a return to campus is possible. Some of the initiatives to increase waste reduction on all campuses include a Freestore (Waterloo), reducing single-use packaging through enhanced procurement practices, and installing additional Zero Waste Bin stations.

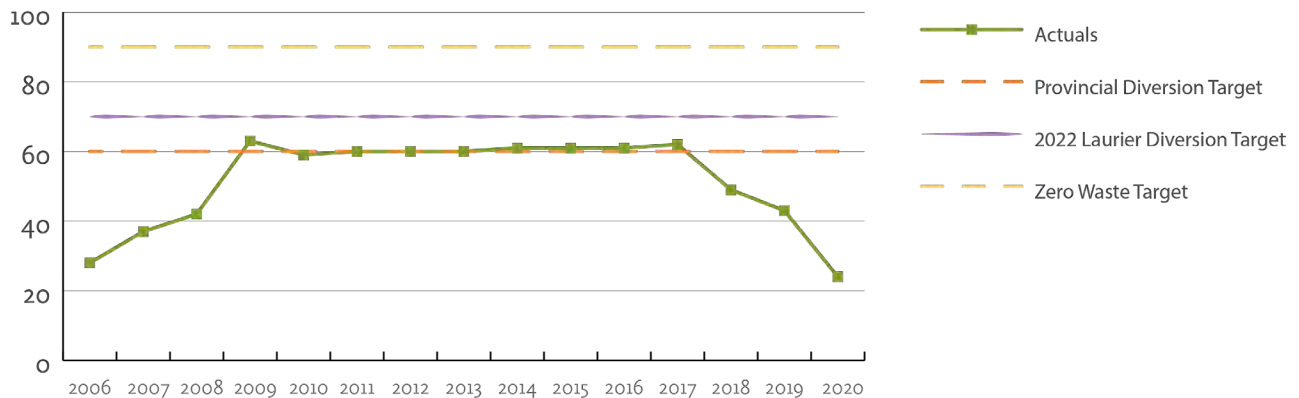


Figure 3. Waterloo’s waste diversion rate from 2006 - 2020 in comparison to provincial and internal targets

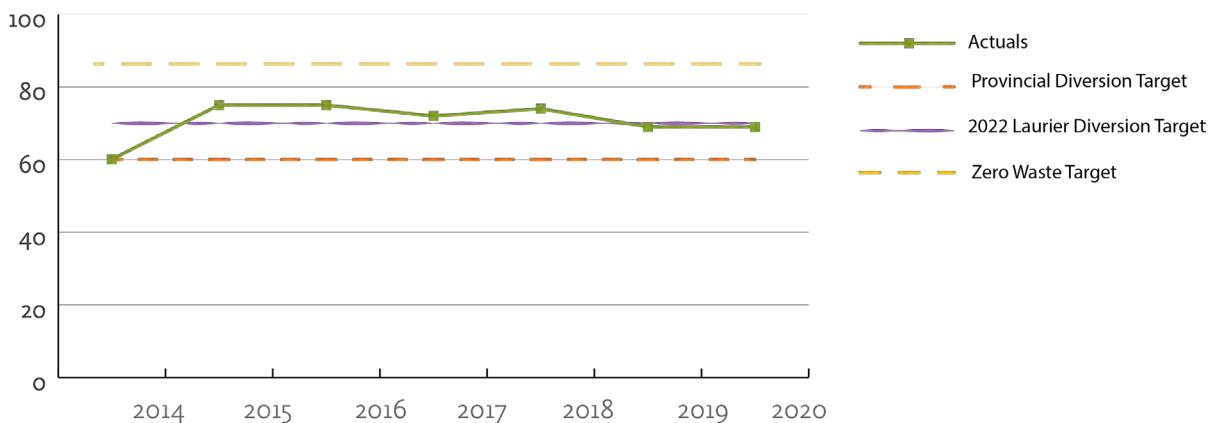


Figure 4. Brantford’s waste diversion rate from 2014 - 2020 in comparison to provincial and internal targets



Operations

FOOD & DINING

SDG GOAL



Improve sustainable food systems in formal and informal campus services

PROGRESS

Action 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

Action 2: Increase the number of ways students and staff can access and purchase local foods

Action 3: Establish a formal program around our edible tree and shrub plantation



SECOND PLACE FOR FAIR TRADE CAMPUS WEEK

Each year, Laurier takes part in the national Fair Trade Campus Week (FTCW). In 2020, this campaign was held virtually during the week of October 26th to 30th. Food Services partnered with the Sustainability Office to showcase Laurier’s commitment and progress in the [Fair Trade Campus program](#).

This year, FTCW included a speaker series, Fairtrade quizzes, giveaways, and a National Challenge. The National Challenge required post-secondary institutions to post about Fairtrade throughout the week, and the institution with the most posts would be crowned as the All-Star Campus. At the end of the week, Laurier was the runner-up, receiving \$500 for future programming and ice cream for a year for the Fair Trade Campus team. The entire week was successful from hosting giveaways to interactive stories on Instagram.





Operations

FOOD & DINING

SUCCESSFUL GROWING SEASON AT NORTHDALÉ

The 2020 growing season at the Northdale Community Garden brought its share of challenges, but ended up with many successes by the end of the season. In collaboration with the Laurier Students' Public Interest Research Group ([LSPIRG](#)), the Sustainability Office, the Grounds team, and Young City Growers (YCG), this year's goal was to have a Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) program. This type of program allows individuals to purchase organic, hyperlocal food in advance to fund the agriculture program. Participants then receive a quarter or half-bushel of produce every week throughout the identified growing season. The goal of implementing a CSA program was achieved as students, staff, and community members were able to purchase memberships and receive their share of vegetables. Beyond the maintenance of the garden, participants learned about anti-racism and food justice throughout the summer.

This year's highlights included:

- A 9-week Community Supported Agriculture program
- Extra food being donated to LSPIRG and Martin Luther University College's Weekly Food Distribution service for students
- The hiring of a YCG Garden Coordinator who ensured the maintenance of the garden



Operations

GROUNDS

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.

PROGRESS

Action 1: Formalize and publish sustainable grounds design standards that support native and low-maintenance plants and wild pollinating species

Action 2: Prioritize planting and maintenance of pollinator friendly plants and habitat to support wild bee populations, particularly those considered vulnerable or at risk

Action 3: Prioritize creation and maintenance of green spaces, pedestrian spaces and linages, including walkways and gathering areas

Action 4: Develop and partner with programs that support healthy ecosystems and human wellness, such as Bee City Canada, Greenbelt Fund, and horticultural therapy



EMBEDDING SUSTAINABILITY IN LANDSCAPE DESIGN

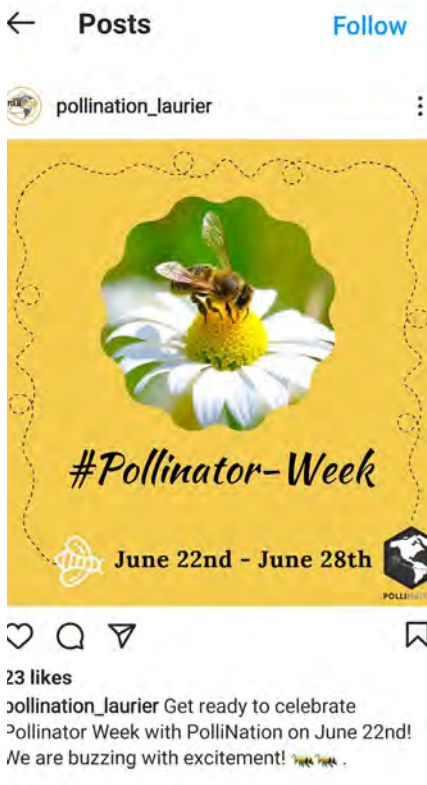
The Landscape Master Plan (the Plan) for the Waterloo campus was presented to Laurier's Board of Governors in Spring 2020. The Plan was developed through a vision and set of principles in consultation with staff, faculty, and students. One of the seven key principles embedded in the Plan is sustainability. By incorporating Low Impact Design principles into stormwater management, it will help increase permeability, infiltration, and overall water quality. Additionally, ecological principles will be implemented within the campus plant community to include plant drought tolerance, habitat and wildlife value, and pollinator support. Over the next several years, the Plan will help enhance the 'urban forest' across the open spaces on campus by adding new tree plantings, increasing tree canopy coverage, and ensuring the forest is a defining attribute of the Waterloo campus.

Operations

GROUNDS

BEE CAMPUS KEEPS ON BUZZING

One of Laurier's Enactus groups – PolliNation – kept the momentum buzzing around the importance of pollinators during the Pollinator Week in June. From June 22nd to the 28th, the group hosted a week long social media campaign on their Instagram channel. Throughout the week, followers could participate in a colouring contest, read about bee facts, and test out DIY activities such as baking dandelion cookies and building a pollinator garden. In addition to Pollinator Week, the group sent quarterly newsletters to inform the Laurier community of the pollinator crisis and how they can take action. In late 2020, PolliNation decided to move away from their enterprise and in 2021 the Sustainability Office will be taking over [Bee Campus](#) initiatives.





Academics

CURRICULUM

o8 GOAL



Improve sustainability knowledge and skills in Laurier students by providing sustainability resources and opportunities to Laurier’s teaching community and to students directly.

PROGRESS

Action 1: Work with the Centre for Teaching Innovation and Excellence (CTIE) and faculty to provide resources to support embedding sustainability content into courses

Action 2: Expand environment and sustainability-related academic programs offered at Laurier through focused programming at Milton campus

Action 3: Connect students to internal and external learning opportunities through class and other partnerships, Sustainability Office events, and communications

Action 4: Partner with the Office of Indigenous Initiatives on sustainability initiatives to provide learning opportunities for students on topics such as land based programs



RESEARCHING SUSTAINABILITY O-WEEK PROGRAM PROTOTYPES

Every year, the Sustainability Office seeks out opportunities to collaborate with other departments and student groups to enhance a culture of sustainability on campus. In the summer of 2020, the Department of [Global Studies](#) and [C3 Innovation Labs \(C3IL\)](#) worked with the Sustainability Office to create a sustainability internship position that would create program prototypes for creating a “Sustainability Orientation.” The goal of the internship was to conduct research on other post-secondary institutions and propose at least two prototypes to implement on our campus. These prototypes included creating a mobile or online app with sustainability resources on campus, accessible electronics recycling, and a Sustainability Hub. Further research and project planning will be done in 2021 to implement aspects of these program prototypes. The Sustainability Office hopes to work towards implementing at least one of these prototypes and continuing its partnership with C3IL and faculty members.



Academics

RESEARCH

09 GOAL



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

PROGRESS

Action 1: Use Sustainability Office communications to profile research and individuals achieving excellence in academics at Laurier within the field of sustainability

Action 2: Work with Laurier researchers to support Sustainability Office initiatives/strategies/ programs and explore opportunities to use campus as a 'Living Lab', particularly through environmental science and engineering programs at the new Milton campus



RESEARCHERS TACKLING SUSTAINABILITY CHALLENGES

Dr. Hind Al-Abadleh



Dr. Hind Al-Abadleh's (Faculty of Science) research interests are in the areas of environmental chemistry relevant to atmospheric, geochemical, and remediation systems. Her research group tackles unresolved scientific problems in the (1) fate of arsenic and phosphorous compounds as governed by their chemistry in soil and (2) the role of metals in changing aerosol chemical and physical properties. Her group is currently investigating the potential use of new materials in the remediation of nitrogen oxides from industrial emissions, trends in air quality near schools in the City of Kitchener, and conversion of carbon dioxide to useful feedstocks.

Dr. Homa Kheyrollah Pour



Dr. Homa Kheyrollah Pour (Geography and Environmental Studies) was appointed as the Canada Research Chair in Remote Sensing of Environmental Change (Tier 2) in 2019. Her research supports the emerging spectrum of environmental issues throughout the cold region, applying remote sensing methods and mathematical modeling. She was recently awarded the NSERC Discovery Grant (2020-2025) to unravel the complex interplay of physical, hydrological and climatological processes that control the role and response of Northern large lakes to regional weather and climate. She is PI and Co-PI of various projects such as the Global Water Futures program. She has been an active member at the Canadian Science Policy Centre (CSPC) and joined the board of directors of CSPC since January 2021.



Engagement

CAMPUS ENGAGEMENT

10 GOAL



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

PROGRESS

Action 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

Action 2: Develop outreach activities around the Sustainable Hawk Fund around opportunities for entrepreneurship and social innovation



WLUFA CLIMATE COMMITTEE TAKING ACTION

In Spring 2020, approximately a dozen WLUFA members put together a proposal for a new WLUFA Climate Action Committee. The committee is now working collaboratively to engage in climate action in four key areas:

- Addressing climate considerations internal to WLUFA operations
- Connecting/convening faculty across the University to share ideas, debate issues, and educate and mobilize one another
- Playing a role in the University's climate action, which includes encouraging administration to set ambitious goals
- Raising WLUFA's voice on climate issues outside of Laurier

There are several priorities that the committee has set out for the 2020-21 academic year. Some of these priorities include exploring opportunities to bring Laurier-focused climate research into the classroom and discussing with the WLUFA membership how Laurier can emerge from the COVID-19 pandemic protocols in a way that reduces the carbon footprint of our working lives.



Engagement

CAMPUS ENGAGEMENT

PROMOTING LEADERSHIP THROUGH WWF

For the past four years, Laurier has been a partner of the [WWF Living Planet Leader Program](#), providing leadership and engagement opportunities to all students. This year, promotions went virtual. The main program that was featured throughout the year was the Living Planet Leader program. Students complete actions in four areas – leadership/teamwork, personal application of sustainability, academics, and volunteerism. In the summer of 2020, WWF conducted online promotions to get more students signed up. In the largest campaign to date, 103 new Laurier students signed up to work through the program and attain the certificate of completion. By the end of the summer, our first Living Planet Leader was awarded their certificate! Brooke Dietrich, who completed both her Undergraduate and Masters-Level degrees, exemplified her leadership in sustainability through volunteer and paid-work with various departments and groups.

Fast-forward to Fall 2020, where the Sustainability Office conducted 1:1 Student Success Sessions for the program. Over 10 students volunteered to learn more about the program through a virtual 1:1 session with the Sustainability Office. From there, students were tasked with committing to completing actions in the four program categories. The goal is to have five students complete their certificate by the end of 2021.





Engagement

CAMPUS ENGAGEMENT

WATERLOO SUSTAINABILITY COUNCIL

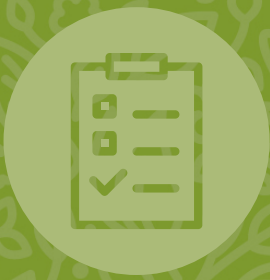


The [Waterloo Sustainability Council](#) is responsible for promoting, educating and inspiring first year students to lead more sustainable lifestyles – on and off-campus. In 2020, 500+ students were engaged. Some of 2020's events have consisted of Instagram challenges promoting students who live sustainably in our community, self-care nights teaching students and trivia nights on sustainable issues. In 2020, the Council participated in a residence life tradition of Hawk Weekend executing an event for 300 students. The Council's signature event was focused on how time is running out to stop the irreversible damage on the planet's ecosystems, but was delivered in the form of an escape room.

BRANTFORD SUSTAINABILITY & SOCIAL CHANGE COUNCIL

The [SSC Council](#) started strong at the beginning of the Fall 2020 term, welcoming six new members. Over the course of the semester, the Council held three events virtually, both bringing in students from Residence and Laurier Off-Campus University Students (LOCUS). Thrifted Threads, a clothing reseller, had a campaign that encouraged students to send them their thrifted outfits, which wrapped up during the Mask Making 101 event. Another successful event was Green Gamers, a sustainable-themed games night where residence students played Charades, The Watershed Game, and Pictionary. Overall, the Council had a strong representation among Brantford Laurier Students and looks forward to the next school year in person.





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.

PROGRESS

Action 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

Action 2: Include sustainability-related information and ongoing training in existing standards, practices, and programs within the preexisting staff sustainability certificate and new hire orientation

Action 3: Advise on existing and emerging external sustainability-related legislation, funding opportunities, and other mandates



ENGAGING STAFF IN A VIRTUAL ENVIRONMENT



For 2020, the Sustainability Office had plans to recognize sustainability staff champions through the Green Office Program and Sustainability Certificate. Program planning came to a halt in Spring 2020, but two online events were still held to engage staff. The first event was in partnership with [Reep Green Solutions](#), who provided an interactive workshop on the app “Project Neutral.” This app allows you to calculate the carbon emissions associated with your lifestyle, including home energy, daily transportation, travel, food, and waste. The second workshop was with Susan Gentilcore, who is the owner of All Things Preserved, a Kitchener-based zero waste business. The workshop was called 10 Easy Steps Towards a Zero Waste Lifestyle, where Susan showcased some of her products and tips to shift towards waste reduction. In 2021, the Sustainability Office will expand online programming and will plan ahead for the return to campus.



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 Centre [ISC]).

PROGRESS

Action 1: Create a formal communications network between stakeholders to improve the reach of shared messages, initiatives and events

Action 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

Action 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

Action 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

Action 5: Partner with relevant groups and offices to support social sustainability-related workshops



13 GOAL



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

PROGRESS

Action 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

Action 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





Diversity, Equity & Inclusion

14 GOAL



Improve the accessibility of sustainability services to people with disabilities.

PROGRESS

Action 1: Encourage projects that confront accessibility issues through the Sustainable Hawk Fund

Action 2: Include the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) in the planning stages of sustainability office projects



4 SEASONS OF RECONCILIATION COURSE LAUNCH

To enhance Indigenous knowledge and practices across the University, the *4 Seasons of Reconciliation* course became available to all Laurier employees. The Office of Indigenous Initiatives, Human Resources, and the Laurier Library partnered to make the course available, which provides the foundational knowledge about Truth and Reconciliation. Importantly, the Sustainability Office has chosen to make this course a mandatory requirement in achieving the Staff Sustainability Certificate. Going forward, any staff or faculty member that wants to attain the certificate will have to complete the *4 Seasons of Reconciliation* course in addition to five designated sustainability workshops. By incorporating Indigenous knowledge and teachings into the Staff Sustainability Certificate, employees will be able to further connect the three pillars of sustainability – the environment, society, and the economy.

MENSTRUAL EQUITY PROJECT

The Menstrual Equity Committee is made up of students, Laurier departments and student organizations, who strive to eliminate barriers and inequities for those who menstruate. In 2020, the mandate of the committee was to advocate for free menstrual products to be available in all washrooms across campuses. Throughout the year, the Committee provided free reusable menstrual products (menstrual cups and reusable pads) to students. Through the Sustainable Hawk Fund and the Student Life Levy, hundreds of reusable period products have been distributed through the Weekly Free Distro Program and the Students' Union Food Banks. The committee also educates the campus community on various pillars of menstrual equity: sustainability, affordability, inclusivity, and destigmatization.



Affordability

15 GOAL



Provide opportunities (particularly for students) to access services and experiences at affordable rates, including at no cost

PROGRESS

Action 1: Continue to offer and promote programs and events at no cost, such as Sustainable Hawk Fund and Sustainable Waterloo Region educational workshops

Action 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

Action 3: Following collection of items during Move-Out Program, redistribute furniture, household, and clothing items at low-cost or no cost for students through a Free Store



INCREASING STUDENT ACCESS TO FOOD & OTHER NECESSITIES

Each week, students are provided with free necessities on campus, including groceries, plant-based meals prepared in-house, health and wellness products, school supplies, and mental health resources. This Weekly Free Distro program provides students with many choices of both non-perishable and fresh foods for diverse diets, maintains anonymity, offers unlimited supplies and seeks to remove barriers by offering accommodations like home deliveries. This initiative is a collaboration between Martin Luther University College, Laurier Students' Public Interest Research Group (LSPiRG), Community Kitchen Co-Operative of KW, and Emmanuel United Church and is supported by many volunteers and donations from the broader community. While this mutual aid effort began in response to unprecedented food insecurity in students due to COVID-19, the goal is to ensure this Weekly Free Distro remains permanent in subsequent years.



Affordability

FOSTERING ENGAGEMENT VIRTUALLY

With COVID-19 halting activities in early Spring 2020, the Sustainability Office still brought its programming online! Over the course of 2020, the team hosted online campaigns, events, and WWF Living Planet Leader “success sessions.” Some of these engagements included an Earth Day Webinar, Fair Trade Campus Week, and a Sustainable Transportation Week. Additionally, the Sustainability Office saw three completed 2019-2020 Sustainable Hawk Fund projects, totaling approximately \$12,000. All of these engagements were free for students to participate in, helping to fulfill Action #1 under the Sustainability Action Plan. In 2021, the Office hopes to partner with more departments to expand its reach and build a culture of sustainability on all campuses.



10 EASY STEPS TOWARDS A ZERO WASTE LIFESTYLE : VIRTUAL WORKSHOP

PRESENTED BY : ALL THINGS PRESERVED



TAKE YOUR IDEA TO THE NEXT LEVEL



Apply to the Sustainable Hawk Fund by Jan. 29, 2021 @ midnight

Conclusion & Next Steps

This past year presented many unique, challenging, and eye-opening opportunities for sustainability at Laurier. In the coming years, new practices and programs will be initiated, which will help to build a culture of sustainability on all campuses. In particular, the Sustainability Office is looking forward to the following in the 2021-22 school year:

- The official rollout of operations for the Freestore on the Waterloo Campus
- Expanding the Move-Out Program to the Brantford Campus to include multi-stream donation sorting in a pilot phase in two residence buildings
- Fulfilling requirements in the Sustainability Tracking, Assessment & Rating System (STARS) to work towards achieving a Platinum designation
- Creating online content for the Staff Sustainability Certificate to promote more staff completing the program in a virtual capacity
- Completing remaining actions in the 2018-2022 Sustainability Action Plan. Some of the actions include:
 - Pursuing the establishment of a Waste Working Group that will integrate and unify departmental waste reduction initiatives focusing on zero waste and campus engagement
 - Improving access to sustainable food systems by working with Food Services to increase local food purchasing, adding plant-based meals, and reducing food waste and packaging.



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Laurier Sustainability Office

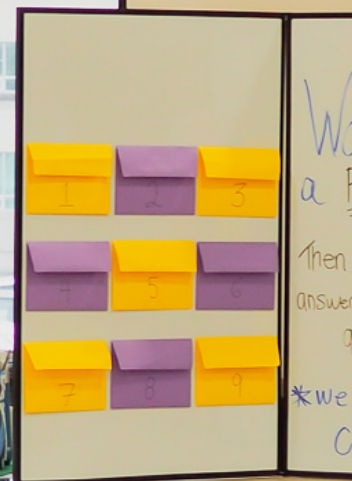


One of many bike racks located on campus.

LAURIER
Inspiring Lives.

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